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A BRIEF SKETCH OF ABD-EL-KADER.

THE recent submission of this extraordinary African has excited an interest so vivid, that a brief sketch of him may not be considered unattractive, though possibly it may be late; yet even still it may in some degree engage attention, or gratify curiosity,—the more so as the details are not generally accessible, and few particulars concerning his personal history have yet transpired.

The deposed chieftain, though his features do not indicate it, is an Arab of pure descent. His father, Mahi-Aden, was a redoubted leader of a western tribe, and his mother, Zorah-Sidih, is said to have been a woman not only of high caste and rare ability, but also one of the few cultivated females whom Arabia in modern days has produced. She is supposed to have indulged even a *penchant* for the *Belles Lettres*; and most of the nerve and vigour which her heroic son possessed was undoubtedly derived from her, his father being a personage of no remarkable enterprise or intelligence. Abd-el-Kader thus presents another to the numerous instances already on record, illustrative of the remark that great talents are in general derived from the mother. Napoleon, Sir Walter Scott—who, we believe, made the observation,—and a host of others might be named if not foreign to the purpose. Abd-el-Kader, the most recent exemplification of it, was born at Mascarah, on the western coast of Africa, in the year 1808; and from the hour of his nativity, if future reports are to be credited, he was a remarkable child. The peasants throughout the vast range of the northern shore of that division of the globe yet declare and believe that a halo surrounded his head at birth; and though the rumour probably is to be traced to his subsequent celebrity, he appears to have been from his infancy considered as a “holy child,” especially designed by the Prophet for great events.

“*Allah! il Allah!* blessed be the Prophet!” resounded throughout the harem at his birth; and it is said that the dervishes of the province announced him as the promised child who was to effect the deliverance of the Faithful. He was consequently educated with peculiar care. Several of the modern languages were familiar to him in his infancy; and at twelve years of age he commenced studying statesmanship. His father, from this period, appears to have been neglected in the household; and when he afterwards became entangled with the Bey of the province at Oran, it was to his son's address that he owed his liberation. The Emir who there presided is said to have been so struck with the youth's intelligence and courage, that he complied with their request, and permitted them to retire to Alexandria.

Mehemet Ali then, as now, governed Egypt; and his vigour and lofty character are said to have made a profound impression on the young Abd-el-Kader, as well as imbued him with a vehement desire to attempt restoring the nationality of his countrymen. The West of Africa was then, as recently, in a state of anarchy; and order was no sooner temporarily restored than again threatened by the inburst of the French. It was in 1830, after Algiers had fallen, that Abd-el-Kader and his father, by the aid of the Pacha, again reappeared in their native country; and the sire being too old or infirm to comply with the desire of

the people to assume the post of their leader, the appointment, by his recommendation, devolved upon the son.

This was in 1831 or 1832, when Abd-el-Kader was in the twenty-third or twenty-fourth year of his age; and he immediately evinced all the inherent powers of a general. His quiet, resolute, aspect impressed adherents with hope—his prompt and vigorous measures struck opponents with fear. He had previously been distinguished by a bold attack on a French detachment, in which, though repulsed, he had displayed equal courage and address, and it soon became evident that he was to be the most formidable opponent the invaders had yet had to encounter. The Dey of Algiers, in the estimation of the natives, had pusillanimously deserted his post, and they disadvantageously contrasted his conduct with the young Emir's, who, though he had his horse shot under him and was severely injured by its fall, immediately returned to the attack. All the attachment and the *prestige* which, notwithstanding his barbarities and blunders, had been previously entertained for the chief of the piratical city, were consequently transferred to Abd-el-Kader, and the natives henceforth followed him with confidence implicit.

Their trust and their hope were not misplaced. Since the days of Jugurtha Africa has not produced such a leader. He immediately made the ablest arrangements, military and political; and while thousands flocked to his banner, induced partly by prophetic predictions, but still more by his already acquired reputation, his father and others preached a new holy war, and the whole country was speedily in revolt. Abd-el-Kader directed his attention in the first instance against a few tribes who had opposed his elevation, and on their reduction he concentrated all his energies against the French.

It were idle now to recapitulate his first encounters. In the course of the years 1832—33 he frequently attacked the enemy, with varied success, being sometimes defeated, but oftener victorious. It was not, however, till towards the end of the latter year that he became generally known to the French, when, having made a vehement inroad to recover the body of a nephew who had been slain in a skirmish preceding, he was noted for the vigour and audacity of his attack. He was unsuccessful; but his opponents had reason to remember his fiery assault and resolute courage. His peculiar head-dress, sharp sword, and admirable horsemanship, were ever afterwards held by them in respectful recollection, though they at first felt inclined to ridicule the former—a handkerchief or turban, arranged in the form of a cap, and which, descending on his neck in thick folds, amply protected it against any strokes of the scimitar, a weapon which the Arabs mostly use, as well as broke the shock of many a sabre-thrust aimed at him in the *mêlée*. The soldiers soon became aware that this *outré* dress surmounted the arm and the strength of a man; and De Michel, the French general who then commanded, after several similar rencontres, was glad to propose or acquiesce in a pacific convention, in the year 1834.

Abd-el-Kader employed the interval in subduing some of the native chiefs, who resisted his evident design to erect an extensive and independent sultanhip in Africa; and the knowledge or suspicion of this intent, in the following year, induced the French to excite them against his authority. Abd-el-Kader became aware of this; and the truce, to the satisfaction of all parties, was consequently broken early in 1835. But the resumption of hostilities proved less favourable to the Emir than the French. He had scarcely subdued the hostile chiefs Sideh-Aribeh and Ben-Ismael, when the French under General Trezel were on him; and the subsequent advance of Marshal Clauzel, in overwhelming force, threatened effectually to crush him. The Arabs, also, encouraged or bought over by the French, deserted him; a force of a thousand foot-soldiers, disciplined and, it is said, officered by Frenchmen who had entered his service for the purpose during the recent peace, abandoned him in a body; and the lately-vanquished chiefs being reinforced afresh, the condition of the Emir soon became desperate. He with difficulty escaped from his capital, Mascarah, and had the mortification immediately to find it in flames. Trezel followed up his

advantage with savage barbarity; most of Abd-el-Kader's adherents were either induced to desert him or were destroyed; and the hunted Emir was soon reduced to solitude—almost to despair. For a moment he felt inclined to abandon all as hopeless and return to Egypt; but the voice of patriotism—perhaps of ambition,—and the innate sense he appears to have entertained of his destiny, prevailed; and, courageous again, he resolved to renew the struggle.

A few of his own men who had escaped the French rejoined him; others who had been cajoled and deceived by the invaders, repaired to his standard; and he was soon again in a condition to take the field. His wife, and mother, and sister, whom he had with difficulty preserved in the recent wreck of his fortune, were again conveyed to a place of safety; and with a few adherents he watched, and as soon as an opportunity occurred, assailed an exploring column of the French. Clauzel, who had imagined all opposition subdued, soon found his advance arrested, and communications menaced. It was near Tafnah where this unexpected interruption occurred; and the marshal, finding the route blocked up, retraced his course. But he was not permitted to do so with impunity; Abd-el-Kader assailed him in flank, sometimes even threatened him in front, again appeared in his rear; whether he advanced, or retrograded, or remained still, continually harassed him; and after numerous sanguinary encounters, ultimately compelled him to fall back upon his original position at Tlemceen.

Abd-el-Kader pursued his advantage. The tribes of the desert having been attracted to his banner by the sound of his recent achievements, he, early in April, deemed himself sufficiently strong to attack the enemy under General D'Arlandes; but his strength being inadequate, he was repulsed with considerable loss. Ten days later, however, having meanwhile been reinforced, he renewed the attempt, and eventually blocked up the French so effectually, that Bugeaud, with a strong division, was obliged to march to their relief. This was the first occasion that the renowned French *sabreur* came in contact, as a commander, with Abd-el-Kader; and the impetuosity of his attack, with his overwhelming numbers, enabled him to gain a decisive triumph. He forced the Arab chief, first to raise the siege of Tafnah, where D'Arlandes had taken refuge, and ultimately to abandon that of Tlemceen, in which Cavaignac, who afterwards acquired a reputation so sinister, had been for some time rigorously blockaded. A few actions of minor importance followed, and the forces of Abd-el-Kader again deserting him as rapidly as they had assembled, he was soon once more reduced to his former solitary condition.

But, energetic and indefatigable, he had, ere the spring of the following year, again assembled such a force, as to be able not only to reduce the tribes to his control, but to endanger the safety of Letaing—another general, who had been sent to hold him in check. An overture for peace was accordingly made him, and a treaty concluded towards the end of May. Tlemceen and Tafnah, with two provinces for which he had disputed, were abandoned to him in terms of this convention. But the French retained a few detached points which gave rise to future discord. Bugeaud, too, had again arrived upon the scene; and the Emir having by his alleged haughty conduct especially offended one of the marshal's friends, who had been employed to conduct the recent negotiation, a pretext for future quarrel was soon established. While the Emir was absent, chastising some distant tribes, insurrection was fomented in his territories at home; and when, notwithstanding this, he again triumphed, and threatened to be in a position more formidable than ever, Bugeaud considered it advisable that no time should be lost in strangling his rising power. Several disputes accordingly occurred; and at last, in 1839, when the Emir had ten thousand regular, and nearly double the number of undisciplined troops under his command, it was deemed prudent to find some means of checking his increasing ascendancy. Some wretched pretence for aggression was quickly discovered. The fiery marshal took the field, and the murderous campaigns of 1840—41 followed. The Emir, not slow to meet him, came in conflict with the French at Thenia,

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Medea, and Miliana, from all of which, though apparently defeated, he invariably arose more powerful than ever. Lamoriciere, however, had, in the mean time reduced his capital, Mascarah; and Changanier, with Bedeau, two other French generals, subdued some insurgent tribes who were approaching to his aid. Tlemceen, also, an important position, had been taken by the latter; and every resource being thus cut off, Abd-el-Kader was under the necessity of seeking shelter within the territories of the Emperor of Morocco.

The war in this exhausted empire followed. The Emir, though he arrived stripped and a fugitive in the dominions of Morocco, found means to enlist Abderhamann in his cause. The emperor is said to have been engaged by Abd-el-Kader's piety, reputation, and address; his profound appearance of resignation and submission to the will of the Prophet; but more probably he was induced to welcome him as one able to aid him against his formidable neighbours, the French. Bugeaud followed the Emir into his new asylum, and the battles of Isly, Tangiers, and the foolish affair of Prince Joinville at Mogador supervened. Abd-el-Kader gallantly distinguished himself in the two former; but in vain. The worn-out empire and its obsolete forces were unable to contend with disciplined troops, and, as a condition of peace, he was once more driven from his refuge to seek shelter in his old retreat of Algeria.

The government of Louis Philippe now surmised they would crush him; and one or two of the princes were despatched from Toulon in expectation of securing the easy triumph of taking him; but the indomitable Emir again found means to resume hostilities, and within a year of these vaunted victories he was threatening the French position at Taras. Danger was impending; the princes were recalled; and to Bugeaud was entrusted the duty of meeting him. This, however, was no easy task. Within a period incredibly short the Emir overran the whole confines of Algeria, and the French marshal had no sooner arrived to assail him at one point, than he found his still more alert opponent had threatened him on another. Those menaces were repeated so long and so often that many began to doubt the existence of an Abd-el-Kader. He was supposed to be but a phantom of the imagination, designed to afford an excuse for the maintenance of a large army in Africa; and even the marshal himself pronounced him *imprenable*.

A moment, and the prospects of Abd-el-Kader looked brighter than ever. His reputation, extraordinary career, and the superstitious opinion attached to his name, induced even the inhabitants of Morocco to prefer him to their own Sultan; and for a time it seemed probable he would shake the other on his throne. This appeared especially imminent after the Emir's memorable exploits in the Saharah, when, with comparatively small resources, he kept the whole African forces of France in check. But it was the prelude of his downfall. The jealousy excited in the Emperor of Morocco's mind was sedulously fostered by the emissaries of Louis Philippe, and gave rise, first to the withdrawal of the aid which Abderhamann had long in secret extended, and ultimately to his taking the field against him. Abd-el-Kader himself had imparted new energy and discipline to the exhausted forces of Morocco, and his own weapons were now turned against him. After a struggle of two years, during which he was more the enemy of Morocco than of the French, he fell by the power of the former; and, to escape the usual penalty of defeat, in its barbarous code, he threw himself into the hands of the French prince.

It is confidently believed that large sums were profusely supplied by Louis Philippe to accomplish this result, with the view of obtaining *éclat* for the prince and affording support, if possible, to the dynasty; but the Duke D'Aumale seems to have acted in a manner to frustrate the design, and to deprive himself as well as the Government of any claim to popularity. By the latest accounts from Africa, in the "*Moniteur Algerien*," it appears that this prince, who has scarcely ever seen a shot fired except on parade, caused or permitted the fallen chieftain of a hundred combats to uncover his feet before entering the French presence-chamber, and deprived him of his favourite horse as a

pledge of submission; while the Government at home have treated the captive hero with still more indignity.

In addition to the other claims he presents to attraction, Abd-el-Kader is said to be a poet of no mean order, and to be attached to philosophic pursuits. In the language of his country he is described as possessing a tongue sweeter than the nightingale's, and a mind more profound than the sea. His figure is slender, and in action was generally half veiled; his appearance is modest, and address subdued. His hands and feet are singularly small and delicate; but his features, as already mentioned, do not disclose the pure *caste* of a high-bred Arab. Several Europeans who have been in his camp speak highly of his temper and affability. His eyes are large and soft, denoting little of the fire that reigns within. His face, though slightly marked with the small-pox, and ruffled, is feminine in its aspect; and altogether in his quiet contemplative appearance there is little to indicate that he is one of the fiercest spirits that ever spurred across a field. He is unquestionably the greatest man whom his country has produced since the days of Jugurtha; and we cannot believe that his bright career is yet at an end. The government of Louis Philippe may, in defiance of treaties, detain him at present from the East, and immure him in some fortress in the North, but he will, in all probability, survive its fall.

A DREAM IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

By MRS. BUSHBY.

I stood within yon sacred pile,
Beneath its lofty dome,
And gazed along each vaulted aisle,
On many a sculptured tomb.
The great, the glorious, and the good
(So by frail mortals deemed)
In marble forms around me stood,
Such as in life they seemed.
But the warrior grasped a bloodless sword,
And the poet's eye was dim,
And the patriot—ah, no glowing word
Might startle now from him!
And as I gazed my thoughts *would* run
On what might be the doom
Of those who had earthly honours won
In realms beyond the tomb.
Sudden the mighty organ sent
Its sacred peals around,
Till the bannered walls above seemed rent
With the soul-inspiring sound.
And as the solemn music swelled
In praise to God above,
Awe-struck methought that I beheld
Each lifeless figure move.
Each cold, fixed feature seemed to rouse,
With a strange life imbued;
And oh! what radiance clothed the brows
Of some that round me stood.
What looks with love celestial beamed!
What holy peace was there!
While some, alas! *they* vainly seemed
To struggle with despair.
Dark passions shook each rigid form,
And rage, remorse, and hate,
Seemed rising like the whirlwind's storm,
To tell *their* fearful fate.

Hushed was the organ's latest peal,
When hark! a gentle strain
Of soothing melody did steal
Around the hallowed fane,
Like the angel voices from the sky,
That sang our Saviour's birth,
And chaunted "Glory to God on high,
Peace and goodwill on earth!"
And though this chaunt was still the same,
It seemed to breathe along,
As if from distant spheres it came,
In echo's faintest song.
Then, oh! amidst the lost, methought
Passion to grief gave place;
As if that seraph song had wrought
In hell's own slaves some grace.
Oh! guilt-bound souls! what bitter woe,
To catch these blissful strains;
Then back to Satan's depths to go,
Where gloomy horror reigns.
Each living statue seemed to bend
In reverence to that hymn;
While, as I gazed, all seemed to blend
In one confusion dim.
My dream was past—that distant strain
From other worlds was o'er;
And each chiselled form became again
As lifeless as before.
But in my soul that vision woke
Reflection's earnest power;
And a warning voice within me spoke
Of Death's approaching hour.
Death, judgment, doom—perdition, bliss!
And these no idle tale;
Oh, heedless sinner, think of this,
While thought may yet prevail.

MAXIMILIAN ROBESPIERRE:

HIS LIFE AND OPINIONS.*

By PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER II.—BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND EARLY LIFE OF ROBESPIERRE.— 1759—1789.

FRANÇOIS Maximilian Joseph Isidore de Robespierre† was the eldest son of a lawyer of Arras. It has been stated, by almost every biographer, that his family was of Irish extraction,‡ having come over with the Cavaliers during the great revolution of 1640. I have not, however, found any authority for this supposition, while the name is certainly not Irish—the only historical name in any way resembling it, on which I have fallen, is that of Ribapierre, a corruption of Pierre Roi des Ribauds.§ The origin of the assertion rests, as far as I can discover, on a most slender thread—that of the great republican's uncle having been a member of a masonic lodge at Arras, founded by Charles Edward Stuart, the pretender.|| One writer asserts "that he accompanied to France the last remnant of that royal house, and after accomplishing this duty, imposed on him by his religious and political faith, established himself in Artois. His tomb still exists in the church of Carvin, a village near Bethune." All this, however, is supposition, resting on no solid basis. The father of Maximilian married, against the will of his family, Marie Josephine Carreau, the daughter of a brewer.¶ who, however, by her gentle virtues, soon won the affections of her husband's relatives. She died young, leaving four children, of whom Maximilian, the eldest, was but nine years of age. So great was the grief of the father, that throwing up his profession, he took to a rambling life in Germany, England, and America—keeping once a school at Cologne, and dying at Munich.

Maximilian, born in 1759, was thus left with an orphan brother and sister, one sister being dead, and early knew what it was to suffer and combat with the world. Their grandfather took charge of them, but he too dying, the children were protected by M. de Conzie, bishop of Arras, who placed Maximilian amongst the choir of his cathedral. Perceiving in him much promise, he used his influence with the Cardinal de Rohan, titular prelate of the *abbaye* of St.

* Continued from page 10.

† Spelt *Robespierre* in the *Moniteur* at first. The *Biographie Universelle* carps at his calling himself *De*; but it was his name, and his father's before him, as this writer ought to have known.

‡ Charles Nodier; "Memoirs" (which I have found wholly apocryphal). Lamartine speaks of him as "of a poor, honest, and respected family, of *English* origin," which explains his puritanic character.

§ Jacob the Bibliophile.

|| The *Biographie Universelle* asserts that it was a species of secret society, as if it had been something political. Searching, however, two curious Masonic works, I find the fact clearly stated. In the "*Acta Latomorum, ou chronologie de l'histoire de la Franche maçonnerie*," Paris, 1815, vol. 1, p. 61, I read: "France, April 15, 1747.—Charles Edouard Stuart, being at Arras, and wishing to testify to the artesian freemasons, as well as to the officers of the garrison of the town of Arras, how pleased and grateful he was for the kindness they had shown him, granted them a *bulle d'institutions* of a primordial chapter, under the distinctive title of the *Ecosse Jacobite*, of which he conferred the government on the lawyers Lagneau, De Robespierre, and others." See also "*Histoire de la Fondation de la G. O. de France*," p. 184. This Robespierre was either Maximilian's father or uncle.

¶ Let none learnedly compare Robespierre, son of a brewer's daughter, with Cromwell. The brewer story is exploded.

Wast, who had a purse at Louis le Grand in his gift, and obtained for him entrance to the college. The young Robespierre accordingly came to Paris in 1770, residing with an uncle, the Abbe de la Roche, canon of Notre Dame, who however, also died shortly after. Our youth's success at college was equal to the efforts which he made, he having carried off the first prizes in nearly every class. He was, moreover, a great favourite with the professors, particularly with M. Herivaux, a classic scholar, who imbued him with much of that classic lore which made him so Roman and Spartan in many of his ideas. So early did his predilections develop themselves, that at college he was known by the nickname of the Roman. On completing his studies, Robespierre waited on the Cardinal de Rohan to thank him, and begged that prince—so famous in the collar affair—to give the vacant scholarship to his brother Augustin. The cardinal, after passing many compliments on the talents and assiduity of Maximilian, readily acquiesced.

The young man now devoted himself to the study of law, while his leisure hours were consumed in the reading of philosophy and politics, particularly Rousseau, his favourite writer, whose "*Contrat Social*," in a measure, formed the character of this celebrated personage.* Having been at length received as an *avocat* by the Parliament of Paris, Maximilian returned to his native city, and took his sister from a convent to reside with him. His father's name at once opened up a connection for him in Arras, and very shortly he found himself fully employed, at an age when lawyers in general are briefless.

The life of the young lawyer was now happy and enviable, very different from that stormy career which afterwards made of his days and nights one continued fever. His time was divided between his legal business and the society of his sister and friends. Robespierre and a number of ardent spirits founded a club under the name of *Rosatis*, which, seemingly devoted to the song and wine-cup, to suppers and riotous meetings, was in reality a political association in which all the more important questions of the day were freely discussed. This society, had, no doubt, considerable influence on the career of our young advocate. But despite his duties, his studies, and his engagements, the indefatigable Robespierre accepted the offer which was made to him to become a member of the academy of Arras, into which he was received on the 15th November, 1783, being then twenty-four years of age—six years after he was its president.

In 1784, however, occurred an event which enables us to give an idea of the literary talents of Robespierre at this early stage of a life which was finally to terminate ere he had gained the full age of manhood. The Royal Society of Arts and Sciences of Metz offered during this year, a prize for the best article in answer to the following question:—"What is the origin of the opinion which extends to the individuals of a whole family a share of the shame which is attached to the infamy of the guilty? Is this opinion injurious or useful? If the first be decided, what measures can be taken to ward off the inconvenience which thence results?" Robespierre sent in a paper, and though Lacretelle was declared to have won the prize, a medal of four hundred francs was awarded to Maximilian.† As the opinions of this celebrated man will explain his character as much as his actions, a fragment or two may not be out of place. The whole will repay perusal. The following view of *prejudice* will show the tendency of Robespierre's mind at five-and-twenty:—

"In what place does it rule? In monarchies; it is there that, seconded by the nature of the government, upheld by manners, fed by the general spirit,

* Lamartine says: "The philosophy of J. J. Rousseau had profoundly moved his intellect, falling upon an active will, it remained not a dead letter; it became in him a dogma, a faith, a fanaticism. In the strong mind of a sectary, every conviction becomes a sect. Robespierre was the Luther of politics."

† See, in the *Mercur de France*, 1785, an article by Lacretelle himself, reviewing the paper of Robespierre, which was published at Amsterdam in 1785, and in Paris the same year.

it seems to have established its empire on an immovable basis. Honour, as has often been before remarked, is the soul of monarchical government—not that philosophic honour which is nothing but the exquisite sentiment which a noble and pure mind has of its own dignity, which has reason for its basis, and is blended with duty, which would exist even far from the eyes of men, with no witness but Heaven, and no judge but conscience; but that political honour the nature of which is to aspire to exclusiveness and privileges, which causes us not to be satisfied with being estimable, but to seek to be esteemed, to be jealous of showing in our conduct more grandeur than justice, more *eclat* and dignity than reason; that honour which makes us value vanity more than virtue, but which in the body politic supplies the place of virtue, since, by the simplest of mechanisms, it compels the citizen to promote the public good, when he thinks he is serving but his own private passion; that honour, often as strange in its laws as grand in its effects, which produces so many sublime sentiments and so many ridiculous prejudices, so many heroic *traits* and extravagant actions; which piques itself generally on respecting the laws, and at others considers it a duty to break them; which imperiously requires obedience to the will of the prince, and yet induces any man who thinks another unjustly preferred to withdraw; which directs us to treat our enemies with generosity, and bids us cut the throat of an offending fellow countryman. In nothing else can we seek for the source of this prejudice in question.”

Robespierre thus writes upon the consequences of a man of rank and respectability being in his day accused of crime:—

“What will take place, when families have not had recourse to a fatal precaution, and the crime of an individual shall have awakened the attention of the police? Then shall we see all who are linked in any way to the guilty one leaguings together to tear him from the punishment with which he is threatened. All that can be done by influence, favour, riches, friendship, good-will, zeal, courage, and despair, is put in practice; every human passion, magnified by the most powerful of all interests, is lavished to silence the law; in presence of every fault it would suppress it finds leagued against it a new conspiracy, more or less to be feared, according to the credit and consideration enjoyed by the family of the criminal. And who can blame these unfortunate beings for uniting their whole strength to escape such a disaster? Public commiseration is theirs. What a strange contrast! The interest of society demands the punishment of the guilty, and yet society feels compelled to wish for his escape. A host of irreproachable citizens are placed between the judges and the accused; to strike him they must plunge the sword with which they are armed into the bosom of crowds of innocent beings. I pity a judge reduced to this cruel position, in which he cannot use the just severity of his office, without immolating also virtue, innocence, beauty, and talent.”

In another place he supposes a far distant traveller speaking after the following manner:—

“I have seen countries where there exists a curious custom. Every time a criminal is condemned to punishment, a number of citizens must also perish with him.* It is not that they are reproached with any fault; they may be just, beneficent, generous; they may possess a thousand talents and a thousand virtues; but they are none the less *des gens infames*.”

This is not the production at five-and-twenty of a person wholly without native power and information, as his detractors pretend. In the following year he wrote for the academy of Amiens an Eloge on Gresset, which contains some really fine passages. He says:—“The true eulogium of a great man are his actions and his works; every other praise is futile for his glory; but still it is a magnificent spectacle to see a nation rendering solemn homage to those who have made it illustrious; contemplating, so to speak, with just pride the monu-

* Robespierre might have added that we do morally what the Chinese do physically. We shun the relatives of criminals; they execute them with the guilty.

ments of its splendour, the title-deeds of its nobility, and awakening a salutary emulation in the heart of its citizens, by the public praises bestowed on the virtues and talents of those who have honoured the land."

I make no excuse for the following extracts; they show Robespierre as no mean writer and critic, and will, I think, somewhat surprise those who have hitherto considered him as a mere dry demagogue. The first is a comparison between Voltaire and Gresset; and though the former be popular and the latter almost forgotten, that is no proof that Robespierre's judgment was erroneous. It must be recollected that this Gresset, so much praised, was almost universally ridiculed, because he had become sincerely pious in the latter part of his life:—

"A contemporary poet seemed to offer Gresset a more formidable rival. Drawn by ardent ambition towards every species of glory, Voltaire had striven in every literary field; but of all the styles in which he was practised, the lighter kind of poetry was that in which he had gained most success and displayed the most decided talent. Victorious over all who had preceded him in the same career, he had attained a degree of reputation most hopeless—for who would contend with him?—when Gresset stood forth to dispute the prize. This young writer, whom his own amusement and the instinct of genius rather than ambition seemed to lead to glory, was perhaps himself astonished to partake with his brilliant rival the attention and suffrages of the public. It would perhaps be bold to decide between these two great poets, whose productions are distinguished by a different character. Perhaps we may find in Voltaire more wit, more *finesse*, more correctness; in Gresset more harmony, richness, and nature; we feel in him more of that amiable negligence, that happy *abandon*, which is the charm of this style of poetry. The graces of Voltaire will appear more brilliant, more adorned, more lively, more sparkling; those of Gresset more simple, more *naïves*, more gay, more touching. The one amuses, enchants, and surprises my mind; the other yields a soft voluptuous delight. If I may be allowed to paint by sensible images the impressions produced on me by the works of these two great poets, I would say that the fugitive pieces of Voltaire yield me a pleasure like that of the aspect of a delicious garden, adorned by the taste of an opulent proprietor; I would compare the sensation excited in me by Gresset to the gentle emotion derived from the sight of those enchanting landscapes where nature has lavished all her charms, and wafted to our very soul the sentiment of her touching beauty."

It is difficult to believe that those who describe Robespierre as lowly and meanly ambitious, devoured by jealousy and hate of genius, can have read this passage, which is the production of a generous mind, warmly appreciating the talents of his fellows—the more that Robespierre was a poet himself. But when calumny has degenerated into system, writers have no leisure to inquire minutely into truth. It is enough to search for the dark side, without troubling themselves about the bright. I conceive that the above is not without talent, while his view of dramas is very clever:—

"We have, in our day, seen the domain of the theatre enlarged by the birth of productions called dramas. But I know not what mania induces a host of critics to declaim against this new style with a species of fanaticism. These fiery censors, persuaded that nature only knows tragedy and comedy, take every dramatic work not coming within one or other of these categories, for a literary monster, which must needs be crushed at its birth, as if that inexhaustible variety of interesting *tableaux* which man and society present to us must necessarily be confined within these narrow limits; as if nature had but two tones, and there were no medium for us between laughter and the transports of furious passion."

The following passages are too full of noble sentiments to be omitted:—

"It is not for me to decide between those philosophers who have condemned the stage and those who have praised it; neither will I examine if Gresset was right when he composed able dramatic works, or when he repented having written them. The lover of literature may regret the productions with which

he might have enriched us; the citizen will sigh to see the stage so often perverted into a public school of corruption. . . . The eulogium of many writers ends with the list of their works, those of Gresset are his least merit. Why can this not be said of all who have shone by their great talents? Are not genius and virtue destined to be united in an immortal alliance? Have not one and the other their common source in the elevation, in the pride, and in the sensibility of the soul? By what fatality, then, have we so often seen genius declaring war on virtue? Writers, more celebrated for your disorders than your talents, you were born to lighten the evils of your fellow creatures, to strew flowers on the passage of human life, and you have come to empoison its flow; you have made it a cruel game to let loose on us all the terrible passions which make up our miseries and our crimes. Dearly have we paid your vaunted masterpieces! They have cost us our morals, our repose, our happiness, and that of all our posterity, to whom they transmit from age to age the licence and corruption of ours."

Never were the men who then, as now, in France, made literature a vehicle of corruption more pitilessly and ably scourged. But we must leave our young author to follow the career of the lawyer and politician.

When Benjamin Franklin came to France, he brought with him his splendid invention of lightning conductors, or *paratonnerres*, as they were called. They were immediately adopted in various parts of France, but not without a rude struggle. Ignorance and superstition was hard at work to prevent their introduction. It was represented to the credulous countrymen that it was an invention of the devil, that it was outraging the Almighty to seek protection against his thunders, and that, moreover, the conductors were dangerous, as tending to draw the both upon the devoted district in which one existed. A Monsieur Vissery de Boisvallé, a rich landowner of St. Omer, erected one on his property; the people took alarm, amongst others, one whom Robespierre thus describes—"In a subterraneous cavern, which receives the light of day through an air-hole, dwells a man well known in St. Omer as Bobo, who has, for a long time, with honour and credit, carried on a trade in salad, which has not enriched him. The *paratonnerre* of M. Vissery has troubled the repose of this honest citizen, who fears that the thunder will come and crack his humble *penates* at the very bottom of his asylum." But Bobo and others succeeded in inducing the *echevins* of St. Omer to order the demolition of the rod. In this predicament M. Vissery applied to young Robespierre, who undertook to appeal to the superior court. We shall see that our lawyer is not a bad hand at a story.

"Nature and education had inspired the *sieur* Vissery de Boisvallé with a decided taste for the study of science; a considerable fortune gave him the means of carrying out his ideas. . . . Every public journal announced to him some new miracle of electricity; he saw, above all, with pleasure, the use of *paratonnerres* justified by experience and spread over all Europe. He then conceived the idea of arming his house with this salutary preservative. As a *savant* it was to him a prospect of delight to see his dwelling become a monument to the power and utility of the sciences he so loved; as a citizen, he rejoiced in setting an example of adopting one of his brightest inventions. In the month of May, 1779, this idea was executed. . . . But soon a formidable conspiracy was organised against it. A lady of St. Omer, whose name I will not mention, recollected that the *sieur* de Boisvallé had defended several actions against her about a party-wall, and at once conceived the great design of overthrowing the machine which frowned upon her chimney; she proposed to herself to league the whole neighbourhood against it, and even to arm justice itself. To carry out this bold plan, she first had a petition manufactured, a masterpiece of good sense, reasoning, and erudition, in which it was set forth that the *sieur* de Vissery had erected on his chimney a machine to draw down thunder on his own house, and the fire of Heaven on the whole locality; it was therein decided that the invention of rods is pernicious, and, to prove the assertion, we have quoted the tragic end of the celebrated Bernouilli, who died a natural death.

Armed with this document, the dame flew to each of her neighbours, taught them the new doctrine of lightning conductors, related the adventure of Bernouilli, showed them the fire of Heaven ready to fall on their houses, and presented the petition for signature. The vivacity of her eloquence carried not all away; some refused to share the glory of her enterprise. Five or six only, more complaisant, or more timid, affixed their names. Adorned with these, worthy of being transmitted to the latest posterity, the noble document was presented to the municipal officers of St. Omer. Its success was prodigious. The petition of the inhabitants of the *rue Marché aux Herbes*—such was their pompous title—decided the fate of the *paratonnerres*. The *echevins* pronounced their ruin, enjoining the *sieur de Vissery* to destroy his, and as the *republique* was menaced with imminent danger, it was condemned to be removed within twenty-four hours; this time elapsed, the little *bailli* was himself to fall upon the fatal machine, and deliver the town from its formidable enemy."

I regret much not to be able to give the whole of his statement, which is admirable in its quiet humour and satire, while his serious investigation on electricity is full of learning, eloquence, and truth, by no means discreditable to a lawyer of five-and-twenty, the matter having been finally decided in favour of Robespierre's client, on the 31st of May, 1783.

This at once raised him to a high position, and his hands became full. "It was," says the *Biographe des Contemporains*, "after this success that the Bishop of Arras named Robespierre judge of a jurisdiction which depended on his bishopric. A person guilty of a capital crime was brought before him, and condemned according to law; but returning to his house, sad, pensive, he said, that though his conscience in no wise reproached him, he would not again be compelled to condemn a man to death, and he sent in his resignation." This is not the place to enlarge on the causes which brought up a summoning of the states general, but no sooner were the *Etats Generaux* announced, than Robespierre appears to have seen that his part was there. It is clear that he at once aimed at being elected, and considering his youth, the vast amount of other ambitious men around him, his comparative insignificance in all Artois, he, a young and rising lawyer, who gave promise, but had not yet performed much, the very aspiration was proof of his genius and consciousness of what was in himself. The faulty nature of the *Etats* of Artois was a subject of universal complaint. To the *tiers Etats*, it was derisive. It was composed of the provincial municipalities, who were chosen by the deputies of the states. The deputies of the states were nine individuals, chosen, three by the nobles, three by the clergy, three by the *tiers*; and these were to elect the municipalities, who were to send the deputies to the states general. It was clear that the popular members would thus be mere tools of the other two orders. Robespierre saw the danger, and boldly attacked the system in a pamphlet.* It is a masterly production. It shows how the effect would be to exclude the *curés* in favour of bishops, the popular members in favour of nominees, the nobility in general in favour of a small minority, and is a stern and uncompromising exposure of the evils of exclusive legislation. One passage is important. It proves that Robespierre was the advocate of the people before the actual revolution was dreamt of. Speaking of a sum of £20 voted for the poor, after thousands had been spent in wasteful prodigalities, he says: "Poor, if this sum does not suffice for your wants, take care you do not murmur. Before softening your struggles, must not your tutors collect out of your patrimony wherewith to show their zeal for the rich and great? Unhappy agriculturists, if some of your cottages be stripped of their wretched furniture to pay your fiscal debts, console yourselves, for your contributions will be employed in a worthy manner. Just God! the administration of the province, already exhausted by all the rapines of fiscal genius, is reduced to neglect the objects most interesting to the public well being; it cannot find funds to make and repair roads, or for indispensable public works; agriculture lan-

* "A la nation artisanne sur la necessite de reformer les Etats D'Artois."

guishes, commerce and industry are annihilated, because it is incapable of making them any advance, another calamity finds them powerless to assist the people, and we find sums for vain expenses or luxury, or largesses, as indecent as ridiculous."

Now began on one side that popularity which was always his with the people, and that intense hatred which aristocracy, monopoly, hypocrisy, and every vice which lives and feeds on the body politic, vowed against Robespierre. Now began that system of calumny which pursued him to death, and hunted him when no man knew where lay his bones. The secret of Robespierre being so vilified is that the people are, with him, all in all—classes nothing. He looks to the happiness of the masses, not of orders, and hence the cloud of falsehood which hangs over his memory. Despite the prodigious effect of his pamphlet, however, his enemies would have crushed him, had not a most romantic cause been placed in his hands.

I gather the facts from Robespierre's own statement* that Antony Alexander Dupond had three children; Joseph, Antoine, and Louis. Antoine enlisted, was no more heard of, and his relations seized his property, under pretence that he had deserted. Louis also took service at sixteen in the regiment of Rohan-Rochefort; was at the taking of Antwerp, at the siege of Namur, at the battle of Raucoux, at the sack of Ghent; he also fought at Sarrfeld and Bergen-op-zoom. In 1748 he entered Maestricht with the victorious army, but peace arriving, his regiment was sent in cantonment to Affeld. Tired of this inaction, he deserted, and as was pretended by his enemies, took service with Holland, then at war with France, but in reality with Sweden, which was in alliance with his native country. In 1765 he returned towards France covered with honour, by virtue of an amnesty. Falling ill on the road, and being without means of subsistence, he entered the Danish army, from which he retired in 1771. After six-and-twenty years' foreign service he was now free, and he hastened to Mouchel, where had dwelt a curé de la Vacqueire, his uncle. This uncle was dead, and his eldest brother, Joseph, a sieur Cressel iron merchant and his sister, wife of one Denaux, had shared the succession, which was in part the wanderer's. The restored was ill-received, but at first great interest was pretended in him. His brother and relatives pretended to fear that his desertion six-and-twenty years before would affect his liberty, and engaged to gain his pardon. With this view he was induced to give up all his papers, and pending the decision to reside with his brother, the *procureur*, who also held all their father's and mother's property. It is believed that his brother would have acted honestly, but he was a weak-minded man, governed by his wife and wife's relations, who united to annoy and ill use the sieur Louis. At length, wearied by their insults, the retired soldier, being denied his share of the property, appealed to the law. But his relatives, aided by their local friends, secretly applied to the minister of the day, who, without inquiry, granted a *lettre de cachet*, in virtue of which Louis Dupond was twelve years incarcerated in a provincial *bastille*. At the termination of this period he escaped, but for many years vainly strove for justice, until Robespierre took up his cause. The subject was most happy for our lawyer, who treated the whole question of the rights of the subject, and denounced the infamous system of the *lettres de cachet* in the most energetic and eloquent terms.

His success was most wonderful. The *memoire*, printed and widely circulated, had an astonishing effect. It was not only calculated to win the sympathies of all for his unfortunate client, but to gain high laurels for the writer and politician. The boldness with which he alluded to the evils of partial and unjust legislation—the learning he displayed—the just appreciation of the duties of governors and governed—combined with the popularity of an attack on the iniquitous *lettres de cachet*,—to call eyes upon Robespierre. He won his cause; the ill-used Louis was reinstated in his rights, and his prosecutors forced to repay their pilferings, while the advocate was returned member for Arras, to the first

* "Memoire pour le Sieur Louis Marie Hyacinthe Dupond, detenne pendant douze ans."

real Parliament which France had ever seen. One extract from the *memoire*, alluding of course to D'Epremesnil, will show the character of Robespierre when on the verge of becoming a legislator:—

"You! whom I shall not name, because all France, and even all Europe, has its eyes upon you; you, to whom a great soul and a great character assure at the same time the mission and the means of commencing the happiest and most interesting of all revolutions. I seek in history—in all history,—a trait of heroism fit to satisfy at the same time a sublime courage and an enlightened spirit; I think of that Roman consul who so resembles you by his eloquence, and who delivered his country from the ruin which menaced her from an audacious and horrible conspiracy; but he was the first magistrate of a free people, and was constrained to purchase public safety by a blow struck at the rigour of the law: you have ensured ours by summoning the law to the assistance of your country, struck by consternation at the prospect of a dark and sinister future To what more august title can a man aspire than to be the *saviour of his country and the defender of the people?*"

Robespierre is now a legislator, and with him we must quit the quiet home, the literary society, the academy, the delights of a provincial residence, to seek the stormy neighbourhood of the capital, whence soon his name was to spread over France, over Europe, over the world, as another word for cruelty and ferocity—how justly will shortly appear.

It will be seen that Robespierre carried to the *Etats-Generaux*, as elements of success, much learning, no mean talents as an orator, an ardent love of free institutions, a passionate sympathy with the people. His personal appearance is thus described by a virulent enemy:—"The figure of Robespierre, ill-formed, without justness in its proportions, without grace in its outline, was below the middle size. There was an habitual convulsive motion in his hands, in his neck, in his eyes, in his shoulders; his physiognomy had no expression; he bore on his livid face and forehead, which he frequently wrinkled, the marks of a bilious and sanguinary temperament. His manners were brutal, his port *brusque* and heavy; the inflexions of his voice, sharp and squeaking, struck the ear most unpleasantly; he cried rather than spoke, and his provincial accent destroyed all melody."

I have before me, as I write, a medallion of Robespierre, by his friend, David of Angers. It is said to be the man himself. It presents a lofty, but prominent forehead, a straight nose, a small mouth, and altogether a rather engaging face. There is a tone of energy about it, certainly; which is, however, far from unpleasant. His voice, which is painted by some as like the cry of a hyena, was in reality somewhat shrill; pale and bilious he was from study and long sedentary habits, but while expression, shape of head, are perhaps indicative of character, I doubt if colour be. He had small grey eyes, and was short-sighted, often wearing spectacles. His dress was always scrupulously neat, his linen white, and his hair particularly cared for.*

* Lamartine says—"Ce qui dominait dans l'ensemble de sa physiognomie, c'était la prodigieuse et continuelle tension du front, des yeux, de la bouche, de tous les muscles de la face. On voyait en l'observant que tous les traits de son visage, comme tous le travail de son ame, convergeaient sans distractions sur un seul point, avec une telle puissance qu'il n'y avait aucune de perdition de volonté dans ce caractère, et qu'il semblait voir d'avance ce qu'il voulait accomplir, comme s'il l'eût eu déjà en réalité sous yeux."—As general authorities for this chapter see "*Conspiracy of Robespierre*," by Montjoie: "*Papiers de Robespierre*;" "*Crimes de la Revolution*," a most curious book; and the "*Girondins*" of Lamartine, so incorrectly translated in the English edition, however, as not to be safely relied on. The following biographical dictionaries give some slight account of the early life of Robespierre, but the details I offer have not hitherto been given; "*Universelle*," "*Conversation*," Jouy; also "*Vie et Crimes de Robespierre*," Nodier, Brougham; see also the "*Montagnards*," by Alphonse Esquiros, a clever production by an enthusiastic young French historian, and published within the last few weeks; also, "*Dict. Hist. de la Rev.*"

THE LILY OF DERWENTWATER.

"Daß ganze Leben als ein Edelstein
"Am Halse hängt der Reugebornen Liebe!"

Griffparzer.

PART THIRD.

A young girl crept mournfully into the sunlight. Her eyes were heavy, her step slow and trailing; listless her air, preoccupied and sad, and young as she was, she had lost all youth's elasticity—all its buoyancy and keen delight. Broken in spirit, crushed and weary-hearted, fair Lucy Carr dragged on her lonely life; a sacrifice to the pride and vanity of one who was too cold to know a real love, too selfish to regard the fate of others. Oh! what penalty of life, what pain and sorrow, for those who recklessly ruin the happiness of youth! Let it come from either man or woman, the sin is equally the same; though kinder, gentler hearts would frame excuses, for her beauty's sake, for the thoughtless levity of a coquette. Ay, that may be well pardoned, that thoughtlessness and levity! We would not rob youth of one ringing laugh, mindless as it may be—we would not bring one shade of sorrow, even to add to it reflection, over the clear brow; for the thoughtless, merry, glad-hearted coquette, we have nought harsher than a gentle admonition—a loving rebuke; she hath no evil in her! Merrily as a young bird she wings through her sunny life, beautifully as a summer flower she adorns her little place, and flings brightness and odour around her. But it is for that deeper, darker, deadlier sin—that false assumption of passion—that love of supremacy and conquest, not from affection, but from pride—that diligent exciting of the heart's fondest feelings, all in mockery and deceit—that worst and fatallest of vanities, which has such fearful results—for this no condemnation is sufficiently harsh, no abhorrence too severe! To feed their own vile vanity on the destruction of others—to heap rose leaves on their way, strewing their hapless victims' path with thorns and briars,—to offer them the poisoned chalice, that their beauty may be more apparent in the act,—to allure and to destroy, for nought holier than a foul, fierce pride—such is the career, such the doings of these Lamias of our world!

What had been Ellen Craven's work in these few months? For vanity she had gained young Frederick's love, to sport with the toy she wearied of when hers; and then what came? His misery and despair, which changed the gladsome boy into the pale and saddened man—which slew the bounding life, and laid it in the cold and narrow grave. An angel came wandering by—pure, serene, and spotless; asking nothing from fate, save one fond heart which should love her well. That heart she might have found—that love she might have known. Though given to her, at the first, in all the falsehood of disappointment, her gentleness and ingenuousness would soon have taught a truer and a fonder esteem: and Lucy Carr, as the wife of Lascelles, must have won his every passionate appreciation. As a constant companion, her peculiar virtues would have won upon him until she had become the true goddess of his salvation. Her sweetness of temper, truth, serenity, and patience, would have shone in all their purest lustre, by the holy light of home. In the crowd and the ball-room—before the stage lights of society, all gaudy colours, and all dazzling paste and tinsel are the best; but out in the calm moonlight of our own dear sacred home, there God's good gifts are best seen and known!

Two victims Ellen's pride had offered up,—the dead boy, the gentle broken-hearted maid; and yet another waited for the crushing chariot wheels of her vanity's triumphal car. But the day of retribution comes on, soon or late; and

men must learn that they cannot infringe Nature's hallowed law of charity without, themselves, bearing the penalty they inflict on others.

Lucy had returned to her father's house, the wreck of her former self. But still patient, still amiable and gentle,—nothing told how deeply she was suffering, except her languor, depression, causeless sorrow, and increased debility. She was threatened with consumption. At her father's request, I hastened down to Borrowdale, and found all too true the sad account I had hoped exaggerated from fear. Without a moment's delay I took her back with me to town, to consult the best physicians on her case; and then I went with her to Clifton, where she was recommended by the doctors.

She was improved by the change: the colour came back to her pale cheeks; and, as the fresh winds upon the downs blew over her, and stirred the dancing ringlets on her brow, I have fairly wept with joy to see that brighter sparkle of her blue eye, and that fresher glow upon her lovely face. Oh! I could have knelt there, upon the sod, out beneath the sky, and thanked my God that he had given it to me to be the minister and the saviour of that sweetest one! My own child, had she been still in life, would never have been loved more tenderly than gentle, virtuous, Lucy Carr! I was old, and my ways were formed; and I had ever been taught to love and honour womanhood for its womanly virtues,—its modesty, its humbleness, its unselfish devotion, its chaste purity, its unquestioning obedience. I knew nothing of the new school of intellectual and moral amazons, who are strong to brave the shapes of all foul vice,—who care not through what dangers and temptations they pass,—dangers at which most virtuous men would blush;—who, mighty in their devotion for the truth,—that esoteric evanescence which evades all men's grasp,—neglect the homely feminine duties to which they were born;—I knew nothing of these, and cared nothing for their knowledge! But a simple maiden child such as Lucy,—this was ever dear to me, and none the less so because rarely found in this age.

I scarcely remember a happier time than these few weeks at Clifton. She herself became even gay; her stronger health gave more power to her mind; and she was able to repress, if not to extinguish, that fatal sorrow which had gone so nigh to slay her! For myself, it was more delight than I thought life still reserved me, to see her gradually improve,—gradually shake off her disease, and regain the old cheery look, the kindly smile, the gentle, mirthful affection, of former days. Like a miser, I hoarded each faintest mark of improvement, counting the smiles, measuring the blushes,—and thinking, fond fool, that I had done well to keep that lovely soul from heaven! And how rich I felt; when I saw her step become as light and bounding as it used to be on the Borrowdale hills, months ago, before that fatal, fatal friendship! It was a time, it was a happiness, which excelled any that youth had given me; for joy, when it comes to the aged man, is more dear, because more understood, and arising from a deeper source, than any, even the most exquisite, sensations of boyhood.

Ellen Craven and the Graysters yet remained in London, though the "season"—that gregarious time, when folly is more foolish, and vanity more vain,—had nearly ended. Of late Mrs. Grayster had, at her husband's earnest request, thrown off some of that first, excessive, and secluding grief, which is the natural expression of a sorrow such as hers. During the time of her *chaperone's* mourning, Ellen Craven, who boasted on "never going out of her way," let what would betide, had been much abroad with Lady Ann Marlow,—a vain, pretty, frivolous, and bold-eyed woman of the world;—a woman whose fortune, dinners, and position, kept her within the pale of society, though many another dame, more innocent, has lost caste and character for imprudences less culpable than hers. She it was whose dice rattled loudest at the German gaming-tables;—she it was whose laugh was merriest, and whose jest was raciest, when champagne and claret had flowed round her table;—her equipage was the most elegant and dashing, her dinners the most delightful and sumptuous, the society that she gathered round her the most agreeable and lax of any woman in London. In person she was small, well made, piquante, always beautifully, but often fantastically, dressed; a vixen, coquette, amazon, and fine lady, by turns.

Perhaps it was not without the intention of affording herself a strong contrast that Ellen Craven, so perfectly ladylike as she was, had chosen Lady Ann Marlow as her *chaperone*: and surely, not even Lucy was more strikingly in opposition than this small, quick, volatile, dissipated little woman, with the dignified and haughty Ellen! Both looked to advantage in their peculiar styles, when thus mated together; and no two guests were more in requisition than Lady Ann and her beautiful young friend. And during all this mad revelry, this ceaseless gaiety, Frederick Grayster's mother sat weeping in her bereavement, and Lucy Carr struggled yet between life and death,—both victims to that cruel, fatal pride!

"Can I never find you alone?" cried Lascelles, in a piqued tone, as morning after morning he came, by appointment, and found his mistress either deeply engaged with Lady Ann, or with milliners, jewellers, and all the harpies of London life about her; or else prepared to be whirled to some morning amusement, which should dissipate the languor of last night's gaiety.

"That tone to me?" said Ellen, haughtily, raising her dark eyes, and fixing them upon her lover, with a cold, impenetrable look. "You forget yourself, Captain Lascelles!"

"Forget myself!—when you have tried my patience to the utmost!—tried it more than any man but myself would have borne! Have I not come repeatedly—each time by your own desire—in hopes of finding you alone and disengaged for one short hour, and each time have you not, purposely, disappointed me?"

"Your jealousy and suspicion says purposely!" returned Ellen, with indifference.

"My fears, Ellen—my love—my devotion."

"Here comes the carriage!" she exclaimed, yawning; "I must go, Lascelles."

The young man bit his lip with vexation. "You go, I presume, to that new friend of yours, Lady Ann Marlow!" he cried, turning pale. "It breaks my heart, Ellen, to see you so intimate with such a woman! It is disreputable for any modest person to be seen with her! How can you ally yourself to such a horrible character?"

"Captain Lascelles! hear me, if you are not mad, or determined that I end our acquaintance at once," began Ellen, her figure drawn up to its full height, and her haughty brows contracted, as she gazed indignantly on her lover. "I would have you to understand that my actions are perfectly free, and that neither you, nor any one, has the power, or the right, to interfere with me in the smallest degree. I allow of no questionings. I brook no command. Lady Ann is my friend, and it is my pleasure to be much with her. This is your answer; the only one that I shall give. If it is not enough for you," and she shrugged her shoulders contemptuously, "I can but regret your exacting temper, for your own sake!"

"Are these the principles, these the feelings, you intend to carry into the married state?" asked Lascelles, his lip quivering.

"Married!—thank God, I am not married yet!" cried Ellen, with indescribable fervour, raising her beautiful eyes to the ceiling, as if she did indeed feel the power and the existence of a God.

"I understand you!" cried Lascelles;—"But no, I will not judge you hastily, Ellen; you do not mean all you say—you do not mean to wound me so cruelly."

"I am not in the habit of speaking falsehoods," Ellen answered, withdrawing the hand that Lascelles had seized: "Do you intend your words as an insult?" And she again fixed her eyes upon the young man, with a strange, cold gaze, more expressive than any words—expressive of the death-hour of her love.

"Do you mean that you would regret your marriage with me?" Lascelles asked, in that calm, still voice of wounded feelings stifled and subdued.

"I do," she answered.

There was a dead silence. Lascelles leaned against the pedestal of a Cupid and Psyche, endeavouring to control his outraged heart; and Ellen sat, drawing on

her glove, feeling excessively thankful that the explanation had come at last, and that she was now free to accept Lord Henry Hardwicke's proposal.

"You are released, Ellen—Miss Craven,—," then said Lascelles, "from an engagement which has become wearisome to you. Farewell! May God above bless you, and may you never know the anguish which this morning you have caused to me. I do not blame you: perhaps, when too late, you will think of your work, and repent it."

"Thank God it is over!" said Ellen, with a relieved sigh, as Lascelles left the room; "And now I am once more free—free to raise myself to the place and the position to which I was born, by a brilliant marriage. I wonder if Lord Henry will be at Lady Ann's!"

And as she leaned back in her luxurious carriage, visions of wealth and splendour, of place and influence, arose before her, dazzling her with their brightness, and obscuring by their false light the pale mild glory of virtue. Virtue against the world?—place a reed in the hand of a crippled pigmy, and expect him to conquer a mail-clad Titan, rather than look for the victory of this over the brilliant seductions and the glowing allurements of earth!

"You have made me wait just seven minutes and a half!" cried Lady Ann, as Ellen entered the room: "What has kept you, so tortoise-like, at home?"

"What can I say?" Ellen answered, smiling; "I have been engaged—*c'est tout!*" She shrugged her shoulders as she spoke—a new and favourite action of hers.

"And pleasantly, I can see. Come, tell me what it was—love or revenge? I know nothing else that would make Ellen Craven's eyes shine brighter! And they are both true luxuries, my dear; they warm your blood, like wine, or hunting, or *rouge et noir*, or any other of those naughty things which you—virtuous proprieties!—call excesses."

"It was not love," said Ellen, flinging herself upon a couch, "nor yet revenge."

"No? And yet you can be so gay!—what, then, was it? Come, tell me, dear! I am as fond as an old maid in a country town of gossip, when it has anything piquant in it. What was it, Ellen?"

"Nothing particular, the simple recovery of liberty."

As she spoke, Lord Henry Hardwicke entered.

"The recovery, and the loss, in one breath," whispered Lady Ann—"the captain's epaulettes exchanged for a future coronet? You are a sad gambler! Your play is high enough, at any rate!—you have staked a franc, and won a Napoleon!"

"It is not won yet," thought Ellen; "but if I know anything of the game the prize falls to-night."

And her thought was true: that very night, fired by Lady Ann's expressive hints, and charmed with the soft impassioned beauty of Ellen Craven, Lord Henry Hardwicke said those few, but momentous, words which decided their fate for ever. To what result? How much of good, or happiness, or virtue, could be the consequence of deeds begun in such wickedness and sin? Treachery, vanity, coldness, and selfishness,—these were the laughing loves that drew Ellen Craven to the altar—these were the beaming virtues which smiled upon her there, and heralded her steps to the sanctuary of God! But was she alone in her career? Are there none others, it may be in higher, it may be in humbler, stations, who enact her part,—and sell for vanity and gold those dear affections and caresses which belong to love alone? Are there no wives who, forgetting vows and duties, lure, to an unlawful passion, for vanity, nought warmer? Are there not maids, whose sole endeavour it is to bring around them blind trusting fools, each one of whom thinks himself the only favoured? And others, fair and lovely as a morning dream, do they not barter themselves, their souls, and bodies, for base foul gain, indifferent to all but the largeness of their prize? These are things that pass around us, and have become so common that we have ceased to wonder at them! And of these was Ellen Craven.

Even more culpable than Lady Ann was that queenly, haughty lady; for she had as her excuse a warm and quick temperament; a nature full of swift, if not of strong, propensities; a craving for animal excitement; herself her own worst injurer, but doing little harm to others. Ellen had none of these to frame her apology. Her self-possession and serenity no passions ruffled, her coldness no fierce warmth could fire; calmly she laid her plot, and calmly watched its unrevealing; and all in cool deliberation, she prepared the sacrifices, and marked the victims to her pride. Alas! alas! that such moral deformity should ever be mated with such glorious beauty! It cannot be! Or the mind, or the sense is deceived; beauty and sin—oh! they may not, must not, dwell together!

The preparations for the marriage went on with vigour and splendour. Lord Henry, intoxicated with the grace, beauty, and passion of his bride, seemed as if he could not sufficiently express his love. By all the most devoted attention, by all costly gifts, by a slave's humility, a woman's unselfishness, he strove to make her feel how thoroughly he was hers. Had he known her better he would have died ere he laid himself thus at her mercy! he would have died ere he had let her feel herself the superior! It is the self-controlled but warm, unyielding but loving, man that alone can master such a character as Ellen's. The slave is despised where the tyrant is respected; and a victory that needs skill, and strength, and superiority, is more prized than one which the very weakness of the foe, and not the own mastery, grants.

Mrs. Grayster, aroused by her husband, and interested in the fate of the beautiful, but wayward and ill-advised girl, shook off the passionateness of her grief, and once more assumed her rights of guardianship. But Ellen was too proud, in her success, to heed much that the gentle lady spoke of warning, and advising, and loving, kind reproof. At first she listened silently, then with impatience; and at last Mrs. Grayster's appearance was the signal for her flight. She had just enough of heart and virtue left to hinder her from committing any flagrant breach of propriety in her intercourse with one who had been as a very mother to her. Mrs. Grayster understood all that Ellen intended to express, and the subject of her late conduct was never mentioned between them.

At last the day came on, and Ellen was made Lord Henry's wife. It was a splendid assemblage—rank, wealth, fame, all were gathered to those brilliant nuptials; and the proud heart of the bride, for the first time, was sated with its glory. Queenly she looked, queenly she trod—her regal beauty eclipsing all the loveliness that beamed around her, as the sun shines out the stars, until the whole atmosphere seemed filled and penetrated by her splendour. Lord Henry wondered in his heart, what virtue he had ever done—of what good he was possessed, that he should call that woman his—that such a luxury of happiness should be poured upon him—he so unworthy all the while! Such the blindness, such the patient trust of men in fate! He was a good, simple, weak man—easily led, easily persuaded; one who believed in his kind, for sorrow had not yet awakened him to the truth, and who had passed through the ordeal of the world little scathed: he was too simple and too foolish to read the lessons which it taught; he accepted things as they seemed, and not as they were: contenting himself with the surface, afraid to examine deeper.

Such a man as this was never meant to be Ellen Craven's husband; it was never meant by nature that the weakest should be the strongest—the subjected the subduer. From the first she had felt her superiority over her lover, but his position, title, riches, dazzled her; and she forgot that the hour must inevitably come when she should loathe the nature which a false glare now concealed. She would grow accustomed to his rank, but not to the weakness of her husband. For a proud woman this is a festering wound which never heals; and Ellen was one who would rather have preferred vice with strength and mental manliness, than this pale, timid, virtue, that owed its existence or to weakness or to cowardice.

The consequences were such as a very child might have foreseen. From two such opposite natures, thus inharmoniously bound together, what but disunion must result? Ellen soon learnt to despise what she did not love; and her

husband woke slowly from his brief, but delightful, dream to find himself disregarded, contemned, unloved, when he had looked for all dear affection, all sympathy, and friendship, and respect. Ellen was too proud to conceal such feelings as these. While she had her game to play, she could assume the falsehood of an affected passion: that game played and won, she threw down her mask and appeared as she really was. And no spectre could have scared that hapless husband more than his proud wife in all her regal loveliness, as she stood by his side, her looks confessing that she loved him no longer—perhaps had never loved him from the first! It was a hard trial for any man—a bitter hour through which to pass; to Lord Henry doubly so, while the influence lasted; for he had not the power of many—to free himself from the tyranny of others, or of his own heart.

Things were in this state—no outbreak, no quarrel, merely the death of coldness,—the silence, best understood of all, which broods over the grave—when Lord Henry and his wife returned to London. They had been absent some nine months, travelling on the Continent; and now came back just as the fashionable season commenced.

The first person who called upon them was Lady Ann Marlow. A year had added to her audacity, improved her beauty, increased her knowledge of the world, deepened her excesses, and made her thrice the “dangerous woman,” that all London—except her husband—confessed her last season. Her quick eyes soon discovered the respective positions of this ill-matched and brilliantly-mated pair; and with more of good feeling than might have been expected from her, she took the weakest, because the injured, part, and gave all her sympathies to Lord Henry. She was a passionate, free-spoken little vixen, with all her loveliness; and she was not long in telling Lady Hardwicke her own most vehement opinion. This Ellen could scarcely be expected to brook. She returned answers haughty and defiant; and it ended by Lady Ann rushing from the house in a paroxysm of rage, swearing horribly, and vowing revenge on the haughty woman who had dared to thus oppose her, after all that she had done for her advancement.

This interference only made matters worse. Ellen, indignant at such “impertinence,” and “presumption,” revenged herself upon her husband,—like all indignant women;—and he, exceedingly grateful to Lady Ann for her warm-hearted sympathy, would not see that any insult had been intended, but declared that all had been kindly meant, and that Ellen ought to go on the instant and apologise for her impatience.

This was too much! Forgetting herself and her position, and annoyed beyond control, the lady haughtily commanded her husband to leave the room,—bidding him seek with Lady Ann that love which she withdrew from him for ever. Lord Henry accepted the challenge;—quitted her presence; and that evening he might be seen in Lady Ann Marlow’s opera-box, talking earnestly to her—his face deadly pale, hers brightly flushed—until they ensconced themselves behind the curtains, till the ballet was over;—and then he went to sup with her, *tête à tête*. A portentous reply to that indignant challenge! It would soon be a declared *guerre à l’outrance* between that noble pair!—and when one spirit is too haughty to give or to receive quarter, Heaven’s mercy be over them both!

While these things were being done in London, sweet Lucy Carr,—her health restored, though her happiness had fled,—once more formed the ornament of the Lakes, and the delight of her father’s house. It was in May—just two years since first the Grayster party had wandered by that lonely cottage,—when one evening Lucy and I,—she my support, for I had been ill, and was much enfeebled,—went out upon the terrace to watch the sun set behind the Basanthwaite hills. She was more pale, and pensive, and silent this evening than I had seen her for a long time; and her eyes were so mournful, and her whole air so depressed, that it filled my heart with sadness to see her thus. She had, too, that indescribable expression which threatens consumption;—the blue eye, the

pale fair skin, the vivid blush, the thin hand,—all as I used to watch, how tenderly!—for hours long at Clifton. I knew well the meaning of this change, for I had seen the depression come gradually, but surely, as the summer deepened, and brought with it such mingled memories of bliss and grief. The last year she had spent this fatal month at Clifton; and though she had suffered much, there was nothing there but the beaming sun to recal the past: here, everything spoke of that bygone time, when first she had awakened to the knowledge of herself,—when first love had been the talisman which had unlocked the fairy casket of life, and shown her the jewels it contained.

Though two years had passed since Lucy had first known Lascelles, yet his memory was as vivid, and her love as strong, as though they had been parted but an hour. Time is nothing to the young heart; and in the country, where so little occurs to distract the attention, affections once formed are lasting as the life. It was so with Lucy. She had seen no one whose image had taken the place which her earliest lover, and her dearest, had made his own; no excitement had swept away the pure remembrance of her wakening hour; none other than Lascelles was loved! But still she would not have acknowledged, even to herself, that she yet cherished this love for one who had so cruelly betrayed and deceived her. She knew that Ellen had married Lord Henry, but she would not have confessed what hidden emotion made her cheek flush so bright, and her blue eyes fill with such glad tears, when she heard that he—he, her own beloved one, was free!—free to love her—free to make her his; and she free too—free to pardon him and be blessed!

Whatever might have been Lucy's secret thought, nothing was expressed; and whatever might have been the silent wish, the hidden impulse, that made her so often turn her eyes towards the road where she had first seen him, as if watching for his return, his name never passed her lips. She might have drank of the waters of Lethe, and become dead to all her former life, for what of phrase or word she spoke concerning it! Yet we do not always need these words to tell us what we would know; I have too much faith in the intuition of love and the teachings of self-knowledge to feel the need of them: and in all my intercourse with my kind—and it has been an intercourse neither scant nor short—I have ever found that this intuitive perception is even a better hierophant, or Revealer of the Holy Mysteries, than formal speech. With Lucy it was ever correct; but little praise to him who could read that fair unsullied book! He had but to bring to his task purity and love, and he would know her—as the angels above tell out their thoughts—by the sympathy of likeness.

This evening—whether the day was hot and sultry, or whether my late illness had left me more than usually anxious, or whether Lucy's palar and depression weighed heavily on me, I cannot tell; but I was restless and uncomfortable, unable to define my own uneasiness. One thing haunted me; and though I am not superstitious, the strange pertinacity with which the image of Lascelles clung to me that day, seemed as a harbinger of something in which he should be included. The only palpable form which my feverish expectation assumed was his appearance; and I felt myself, as Lucy, watching the main road, as if I looked for his handsome, manly figure to appear with each fleeting shade.

But the hours wore on; the evening saddened into twilight, the twilight deepened into night; and then the moon arose. The day had been intensely hot, and Lucy and myself were both refreshed with the cool breeze that sprang up, lightly, from the lake, as the moon-queen came forth. All was still: not a sound broke through that holy silence—not a voice of earth destroyed that moonlight spell. The birds had ceased their song, the insects stilled their hum; not a ripple broke upon the shore, not a leaf stirred in the grove. Then came up the breeze—lightly, playfully, and the trees shook their green ringlets with joy at its coming, and the young waves leaped up, laughing, in the moonlight. Healthful and gay, the light breeze fled onward, till it kissed the maiden's cheek, and crept among her golden locks.

Something glided noiselessly across the long bright line which the moon made upon the lake. It was a boat, guided by one man. Lucy caught her breath, and I felt my own hand tremble as I took hers to my heart, unable even to whisper aught of encouragement or love. The boat came swiftly and noiselessly to land; and the man leaped out. Soon we saw him pace the green walk among the trees,—come up through the copse,—cross the road,—and now he stood by the cottage gate. The shadow of a beech tree fell over him: we could only see his form.

The gate slowly opens; the figure advances. Up the gravel walk it comes, treading lightly, and keeping ever in the shade. Lucy clung to me; and her heart beat quick and loud. We both knew the thoughts of each,—and both expected the same revelation of love. The figure advances nearer. We see it look around, as it seems, lovingly: we see it stoop to pluck the flowers, then fold them to his heart, as if they were diamond gems. Yet a moment longer;—the man turns as if to go;—but another thought strikes him, and he comes upward to the terrace where we stood. He crossed into the light, and we saw his face. Lucy uttered a cry of joy and fear together, and then I saw her clasped in the arms of Lascelles!

An older man, and a wiser,—taught in no gentle school, he had returned for peace to the angel whose comfort he had once rejected: and she,—what could she do, but weep and smile, and give all liberally the love which she might not deny? He had suffered much; and sorrow oft makes men wiser, gentler, and more kind. It had taught him to appreciate the love whose value he had so bitterly mistaken, blinded by the glare of a false passion! Whatever of youthful levity he might have had, was now gone: a man, conscious of the worth and dignity of life,—conscious of the duty owed to others,—his past follies repented of, and all his excesses sobered, he was only now fit to be the husband of Lucy Carr, though the world might have named such a marriage mean or foolish. It is not the virginity, but the dignity, of a heart which makes it worth,—it is not the freshness, but the truth, of a love which gives it value; and Lucy found that Lascelles, as the duped and betrayed lover of Ellen Craven, was a better, wiser, and truer man, than he would have been, without that purification of suffering.

And now my task was ended! I had guarded the young lamb long as I was able—long as I was needed; and then I gave her to a husband's care; and I never repented the hour when I stood upon the terrace, and blessed the lovers in the moonlight. Bright days were theirs; sweet hours of confidence and love, a life of harmony, and peace, and truth! No shadow crossed their way, save one, when they read of Lord Henry's desertion of his wife and his elopement with Lady Ann. Stern justice to the haughty Ellen; for this was but the first of a long series, which dragged her down, low, low, to poverty and shame! Tongues were busy with her name; and virtuous women turned away when she approached. Her wanton cruelties, which, as rich and powerful, had been but her sweet graces, now became shameless vices; and the virtuous women, who gathered flatteringly round her, when she could pay them with her brilliant balls and routs, and *soirées*, at which it was a stamp or passport to be "seen," deserted her with blushing shame and indignation, when the divorce was passed—her title gone—her fortune spent. And though she had been the innocent and the oppressed in this, yet society is never keenly alive to the distinctions of right and wrong. Much that was reprehensible, and truly so, in her palmy days, was now remembered to her ruin; and Ellen found herself deserted, shunned—nay, even pointed at, as she who had ruined her husband, and forced him to leave her, and whose coquetries and wanton ways had long been the scandal of her society.

I do not say that the sentence, of itself, was unjust. It was not so; but the reasons which brought it down upon her now, were criminal and bad,—yet befitting her. She had sacrificed her all,—virtue, honour, womanhood,—to the world, and it was just that the world should be her judge. She had ruined, for

her vanity's sake, the happiness of many;—it was just that through her vanity she herself should be next ruined. But her judges were none the less guilty in their sentence: nor were their feelings the less base and mean. Yet their time also will come in its appointed hour, and then they will be found, when fallen, wanting in all the requisites of humanity, which, when prosperous, they had adorned by their participation! No pity for them! They have chosen their path;—but they had a better way before them, if they had so willed! Leave them there!—and perhaps they, too, may come out from pain, purified to virtue:—perhaps they, too, may learn life's better value,—and lay to heart its dearest lesson, of love, and gentleness, and justice unto all!

A NIGHT WITH THE M.P.'S.

By ANGUS B. REACH.

It is a bright afternoon in the height of the season. Parliament-street is thronged with vehicles and passengers. The grey towers of the Abbey, and the bald-looking church of St. Margaret, and the plain business-like facade of the law courts—are lighted up in the full blaze of the summer's sun. Groups of men now hurrying on, now lounging in idle clusters, occupy the broad foot-pavement. Barristers, bewigged and begowned, saunter hither and thither, in earnest conversation with sharp-looking Parliamentary solicitors. Clerks are hurrying to and fro with blue bags. Reporters come dropping down one by one on their way to the gallery. Knots of provincial ladies and gentlemen, marshalled by policemen into lines, upon the pavement, are eagerly looking out for Parliamentary notabilities; and crowds of that idle, seedy class of people who are always to be found when anything is going on which can be seen gratis, are disposed in rough rank and file on the Abbey side of the way. Just before them parade a whole troop of saddle-horses, every second one ridden by a smart groom. Quiet comfortable-looking broughams go gliding up and down with that peculiar species of unpretending, sneaking motion peculiar to broughams. Flashing cabs are occupied by diminutive tigers; while about Poets'-corner you see huddled up together a multitudinous array of carriages, family coaches, phaetons, clarences, and led horses, presided over by a host of chattering grooms and lackeys.

And it is one shabby little yellow door, just at the corner of the law-court facade, which seems the centre of attraction. Two or three men with porters' badges, and as many police constables stand about it. There is a sort of longitudinal stepping stone before it; and here carriages and cabs pull up in quick succession; the door of each vehicle is hastily opened by one of the porters afore-said—one or more gentlemen jump out and vanish into the shabby portal; others come quietly on foot, singly or two or three abreast; but all who enter at the corner door are greeted by the uplifted hats of porters and policemen; for the shabby entrance is the portal of the House of Commons, and the gentlemen who disappear within it are the wise M.P.'s who rule our land.

You can only, unqualified reader, catch a passing glimpse of the interior. You will see a low whitewashed room. A double line of cloak-pins runs round it, and from each pin dangles a label, setting forth the name of an M.P.—consequently there must be 656 pins in the room. There is little else to be seen within it. The floor is covered with thick matting. A couple of baize covered tables stand on either side—at that on the right, half a dozen clerks are writing—that on the left is occupied by heaps of evening papers, wet from the press.

Not being M. P.'s, we proceed round the corner to gain the lobby, by another entrance. Observe the respectable old dame who sells oranges, apples, and pears, in the porch. Now we are in the lobby. 'Tis an odd place—with its

whitewashed walls—and labyrinths of passages, and openings, and doors, leading you know not whither—and its ranges of buckets along the walls—and the matting on the floor, which makes you think you are walking over a succession of door-mats—and its trap-door gratings, from whence puffs of hot wind come surging up. And then you observe the rank and file of strangers, waiting their turn for admission to the gallery—and the black-coated white-cravated officers of the House, each decorated with a brass label, worn by a chain round his neck—and lastly you see those wise *patres conscripti*, the sacred, bailiff-tabooed M.P.'s themselves, swaggering backwards and forwards; and you catch waifs and strays of their lofty and patriotic talk:—

"I say Wiggins, what are to be the numbers?"

"Our people make them forty-five."

"Bet you three to one they're under thirty?"

And Wiggins and his friend pass on.

"What way will Lubbers vote?"

"Oh, we have him safe." Mrs. Redde Taype asked his wife to her *matinée musicale* this morning.

Another couple of senators appear.

"I say, Sawyer, let's have a pair, till twelve; there can't be a division till late, for Nolan is going to talk at eleven for two hours, to give the men time to come from the ballet?"

"All right then, till twelve."

By this time, if one of the white-cravated gentry has not espied and turned us out ignominiously, we have turned a corner, and see before us, flanked by two porters' chairs, a glass door, which is continually being swung backwards and forwards, and through which you can only catch occasional glimpses of a distant sort of shabby gothic throne, with the Lion and the Unicorn on the top, and a man in a big wig below—that is the Speaker.

So much for the precincts of St. Stephen's.

It is the night of a grand debate, the house is crammed; on either side rises a black sea of hats, groups are talking eagerly at the bar, and behind the Speaker's chair—members are continually running across the floor to confer with some one opposite, and amid the loud gabbling hum, you can see—but you cannot hear—the three or four individuals who, with papers in their hands, on either side of the table, are hurriedly running over the clauses of a private bill. Only two or three places are vacant on the principal benches on the Speaker's right and left. These are the seats of the ministers and the leaders of the Opposition. Presently the latter are filled by gentlemen who deposit bundles of documents upon the table and then lean back, with pleasant, smiling faces which seem to say, "It's all right; won't we puzzle them?"

The clock now points ten minutes to five, when two or three gentlemen successively appear, each bearing an oblong little morocco-covered box, with a brass handle, and the heads and tails of folded papers peeping out from either extremity. These gentlemen sit down on the Ministerial bench, and solemnly address themselves to open their boxes with little keys hanging from their watch chains. This accomplished, they deposit the contents upon the table, and await in silence the opening of the fight.

And now the House is becoming every moment more eager. All preliminary business is gabbled over at railroad pace; and when the industrious Mr. Gloom rises to ask eighteen questions of the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, relative to the commercial treaty lately concluded by the Duchy of Saurkroutwaggenberg with the Tolverein, he is assailed by a volley of "Oh's and Groans," which would have prostrated any less potent champion. But it is not until the Vice-President assures the hon. member that no official information, &c. &c. &c., has been received by her Majesty's Government, &c. &c. &c., that a sudden hush makes itself felt—that the hon. M.P.'s compose themselves into listening attitudes—that the occupants of the members' galleries lean attentively over the railings—and the voice of the minister is heard enunciating, amid the dearest

silence, the first sentence of perhaps a three-hour speech. The debate is now fairly on. Dinner time, indeed, brings a lull—the notabilities take flight, leaving only, perhaps, a single first-rater on either side, just to watch the proceedings. Then comes the era—in the reporters' gallery slang—of "little men," and the newspaper scribes are thankful to find they can bundle a whole oration of bad grammar and worse sense up into—"After a few words from Mr. Tomkins;" to the unbounded indignation of that senator, who has the papers brought him in bed next morning, and who vows that the press have entered into a special conspiracy to put him down. The evening wears on, however, and the house begins to refill. White waistcoats and patent leather boots increase and multiply. An increasing warmth and spirit show themselves in the proceedings. The "big men," finding they have got a full and excited audience, get up and explode one after the other; speeches get more and more peppery—party hits more and more stinging; the feeble "hear, hear!" of the early part of the evening becomes a volley of cheering shouts; every one is thoroughly roused—thoroughly warmed to his work; party leaders turn round and address their followers behind them rather than the House, and every enthusiastic supporting cheer from one side is answered by loud derisive bursts of "Oh, oh's!" from the other. Perhaps a "scene" adds additional cayenne to the dish. One hon. member insinuates very broadly that another hon. member is no better than he ought to be; on this, all the second hon. member's friends groan and shout "Oh, oh!" and one of them gets up and says he rises to order; and then both parties shout and yell, and both the hon. members stand making pantomimic speeches in the uproar. At length it is partially stilled, and the first hon. member says he reiterates his statements, and then there is what the reporters call "renewed uproar," and the hon. member alluded to contradicts the first hon. member to his teeth; and, in the midst of a torrent of groans and shouts, the hon. member who has risen to order bawls out that he throws himself on the House, and wishes to know whether this disgraceful scene is to be allowed to continue; on which the Speaker, amid a dead silence, proclaims in a sonorous tone that the words used by both hon. members are unparliamentary; whereon the first hon. member retracts his, and the second hon. member retracts his, and each proclaims the high individual esteem in which he holds the other—and then all the hon. members cheer, and things go on as before.

At length the hand of the clock in the Speaker's gallery points to after midnight, and the Premier is on his legs making the closing speech of the debate. Now comes the "whip" preparatory to the division. Urgent messages are sent to Bellamy's and the smoking-room, and confidential agents of the "whippers in" fling themselves into cabs and tear off to Pall-mall, rushing from club to club to pass the word that the division will take place almost immediately. The House is now all impatience: M.P.'s who have come from parties and want to get back roar "Divide!" till they are hoarse; and at length a Secretary of the Treasury having whispered to the Premier that all their men are ready, the orator winds up in an impassioned peroration; and then—amid the burst of hurrahs which hail the last twanging sentence,—you hear the Speaker's burly voice, shouting, "Strangers must withdraw!" echoed by the Serjeant-at-Arms and his officers, screaming at the top of their voices, "Clear the gallery!" And the gallery is cleared—and the division takes place—and one-half of the next morning's papers say the country is saved, and the other half say that it is lost.

Such is a great night in the House of Commons. Happily for the readers of newspapers every debate is not such a monster one. The impracticables—the riders of hobbies—give the Speaker many a holiday. Tuesdays and Thursdays, it ought to be known, are appropriated to the motions of individual private members; and on one of those days the "Notice Paper" containing the business for the evening will probably begin as follows:—

Mr. Gloom—To move for returns of every pint of porter drunk in the metropolis from the 1st of April, 1800, to the 1st of April, 1847 (inclusive)—specifying in what cases the chill was off; also whether the liquor

was served in pewter or glass tumblers; also how each pint was paid for, whether in pence or half-pence; also in the case of a pint being scored, how long it remained unpaid for, and how often the customer was dunned for the amount.

Mr. LUKE WARME—To call the attention of the House to the case of John Poddle, a scholar in a national school, who was flogged in the year 1833, for taking naps at the master.

Mr. DENNIS O'DOWD—To move for leave to bring in a bill to do away with the necessity of the descendants of the ancient Irish kings paying their debts.

Mr. JOHN JONES.—To move for a committee of the whole House, to inquire into the condition of things in general.

Mr. GLOOM—To move for a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the policy of abolishing the import duties on Circassian cream, Tartar emetic, and Prussian blue.

Mr. JOHN BLETHERS—To move for leave to bring in a bill for the abolition of capital punishment, and for the maintenance for life, in a comfortable, respectable, and in very aggravated cases—in a luxurious manner, of individuals convicted of murder.

And so on for three octavo pages of close print.

The Speaker is of course at his post at the usual hour—shortly before four o'clock. About a dozen of members, consisting of Mr. Gloom, Mr. Luke Warne, Mr. Dennis O'Dowd, Mr. John Jones, Mr. John Blethers, and their peculiar friends and seconders, are present. The Speaker cannot take the chair until there are forty members present, and he sits in the chief clerk's place, counting the M.P.'s as they drop in one by one, with the corner of his cocked hat. The dial marks two minutes to four, and the eager legislators are well aware that if the magic hour be actually attained without the presence of the requisite forty, the House stands *ipso facto* adjourned. The glass door is kept open, and the anxious eyes of Mr. Gloom see a couple of dozen members laughing in the lobby; out he flies, and by dint of persuasion and cajolery manages to induce the best natured of them to enter.

Meantime Mr. Toppe Sawyer is just as busy keeping everybody he can out.

"Don't make a house, my good fellow; the Speaker wants a holiday, and no wonder; there's nothing on the paper, only a lot of stuff of these bores inside. Don't humour them—it would be a positive sin."

The hand of the clock stands at a minute to four. The fate of the day is trembling in the balance. The Speaker has counted thirty-seven, ha! one more—"thirty-eight,"—"confound him," groan the reporters, in an under-toned chorus—three seconds more, "thirty-nine,"—another mute groan in the gallery—never mind, there is hope yet—the minute hand is on the first figure of twelve, no house! Yes!—No!—Ah! confusion—in the very nick of time—"Forty!"

The Speaker mounts to his chair, and Gloom and the Bores are delighted.

"Never mind," mutters Toppe Sawyer, "they can't keep a house"—and he is right.

By the time the clock points to a quarter past five, Gloom is humming and hawing, and correcting himself, and repeating himself, and committing frightful ravages on the harmless Mr. Lindley Murray, to about a couple of dozen listless auditors, one-third of whom are stretched out full length on the back benches.

Toppe Sawyer sees that his time is come.

"Mr. Speaker: Sir, I beg to move that the House be counted."

Gloom sits down; looking like a grisly bear forced to squat on broken bottles, and in five minutes thereafter the house is empty and silent, and the Speaker is being dragged off by his spanking greys rejoicingly to dinner.

PAUL PEVENSEY; OR, THE MAN FROM BELOW.*

CHAP. XXVII.—THE FRUITLESS SEARCH.

Few things in nature are more startlingly different than the eve and the morrow of crime. The approaches to it are so often disguised by excitement and the influence of the more turbulent passions, that they appear rather pleasing than otherwise. But when the deed has been done—when blood, for example, has been shed—when the immortal soul has been dislodged violently from its mansion of clay, a strange revulsion of feeling takes place. A veil seems to drop from before the eyes of the criminal, and where he could previously discover nothing but the encouraging forms of vengeance and punishment, he discerns the dark encircling flames of hell shooting up into the lurid air, filled with spectral apparitions, ready to start forth and drag him to his doom; and to escape from visions of the mind so appalling many deliver themselves up to justice, preferring an ignominious death to the perpetual stings of conscience.

The night after the murder numerous colliers were collected together at the Jarrow, the small public-house in the hollow where Paul remained a sort of prisoner on parole. Among them appeared one man of most dismal and dejected aspect. He drank, he smoked, he made an effort to talk loud and appear as jovial as his companions; but there was evidently a weight upon his brain which he could not shake off. The brandy-and-water would not make him drunk; it seemed to have lost its strength, and went down his throat as harmlessly as so much puddle. To a casual observer this individual would have appeared to be much courted; all the colliers made a point of shaking hands with him and asking him to drink, while several of them patted him on the shoulder, and said he had done good service to his marrows.

But those rough vagabonds, in whatever other vices they might excel, were no great proficients in jesuitry. Their mirth was easily discovered to be forced, and their sympathy to be affected. An expression of loathing involuntarily sat on their grim countenances; and when they had shaken hands with the individual in question, they unconsciously wiped their palm against their corduroys, as if to remove some stain of pollution. With the quick perception which guilt imparts, the man penetrated into their thoughts, and his soul became wrapped, as he did so, in tenfold darkness and horror. He was the murderer. The farce of drawing lots had proved useless, for being unaccustomed to the trade of blood, he immediately betrayed himself, whilst seeking, by all the sophistry of which the rude heart is master, to reconcile his mind to the wild act he had performed, by falling back on the supposed purity of his motives, and the magnitude and goodness of the object he had in view. His efforts, however, proved unavailing, and to obtain some respite from mental suffering he swallowed a quantity of raw spirits, which at length procured him the temporary oblivion he coveted. With a half-smoked pipe in his hand, he fell back, pale and ghastly, in his chair, and dropped into a deep sleep.

While he continued in this state the other colliers all retired, leaving no one but Paul and the murderer in the room. It was some time past midnight when he awoke. The candles had burnt low in their sockets, and the wicks made winding sheets and coffins, under the direction of those malevolent sprites which love to terrify and bewilder unhappy human beings, by fore-showing evils to come. How aghast looked the wretched man, as his eyes wandered round the empty room in search of some one whose company might deliver him from his own thoughts! At length he perceived Paul, curled up fast asleep in an arm-chair; and starting up, made over—half reeling, half walking—towards him, that he might enjoy the satisfaction of hearing a human voice, without which life now

* Continued from page 63.

appeared to be insupportable. He had risen the day before one of the gayest and most reckless of the pitmen; his energy knew no bounds, and he did his work in the court-house with a resolution which would have done honour to a Spanish brigand. But then came the collapse. The world, which had seemed to him so material before, now appeared to lose its solidity and shrink away, leaving nothing but an agglomeration of unsubstantial vapours, upon which his spirit could find no footing. With a gentle shake he roused the slumbering boy.

"What is the matter?" cried Paul, who had now grown so accustomed to the uncouth manners of the colliers, that he experienced neither alarm nor annoyance.

"Nothing," replied the man, in a soothing voice; "only I want to talk with you."

"I'm nation sleepy," cried Paul; "but fire away, I'll keep myself awake if I can."

"You're a good boy," answered the murderer; "but tell me, now, did you ever kill anybody?"

"Yes, seven or eight," replied Paul.

"What! men?"

"I don't know as they were all men, I think there was some children among 'em."

"How did you do it?"

"Why, I left the trap-door open, to be sure, and blowed 'em up."

"Did you do it on purpose?"

"No: I was nation sleepy, as I am now, and dropped off into a good sound nap; and when I came to myself again the mischief was done."

"And don't you feel very miserable?"

"No, I can't say as I do; it was an accident—I couldn't help it; and some day, perhaps, I shall be blowed up myself by the carelessness of some little devil, just such as I was then."

"But what would you say to a man who had killed another on purpose?"

"Do you mean a murderer?" inquired Paul.

"No—not exactly that," answered the man, with a sort of panting voice; "not exactly a——, but a man who had killed another for the good of the public."

"Do you mean a sodger or a hangman?"

The man put his hand to his neck, as if he felt the rope already about it; and then said in a low voice—"No, no; I don't speak of sodgers or hangmen, but of a person who kills rich and wicked men, that try to oppress the poor."

"That's God's business," answered Paul; "we should leave it to Him: He knows best about them things; and, as Mr. Link used to say, no good ever comes of our meddling with his duty."

"Ay, but Providence is slow, and when you're suffering you don't know what is best."

"No, you don't; but it's always best, at all events, not to do nothing that you can't account for either in this world or the next."

The murderer's only reply was a deep groan. Paul started.

"Arn't you well?" inquired he.

"Not very," replied the murderer, in a subdued tone; "but tell me this: supposing you saw a murderer before you, would you shake hands with him?"

"I'd rather not," answered Paul; "but if it was likely to be of any service to him, I'd do it."

"Would you give him up to a constable?"

"No, that I certainly would not."

"Why?"

"Because I ain't a thief-taker or a policeman, and I don't like to get people scraggled, even when they deserve it."

"But supposing they offered you money?"

"Well, they might offer, but they wouldn't be none the nearer the mark; I

am rather obstinate in my notions, and what I think is right I'll do, whether people like it or not—but, hark, what's that, I hear feet shuffling about the window?"

"Where—which side?" exclaimed the man. Oh, God! they'll take me."

"For what?" inquired Paul, as his companion made towards the back window.

"I'm a murderer!" he replied, as he opened the casement and leaped out into the dark.

"Well," muttered Paul to himself, "I guessed as much;" and then closing and fastening the casement, and blowing out the candles, he returned to his arm-chair and curled himself up as before.

Several men were now heard thundering at the front door, and demanding instant admittance. They knocked for some time, however, because the landlord having taken a stiff night-cap in the evening, could not be easily waked; and no one else was disposed to perform his duty. At length, however, mine host crawled out of bed and opened the front door, upon which a posse of constables with staves and dark lanterns rushed in, fastened the door after them, and immediately began to search for the murderer, whom they affirmed to be concealed somewhere in the house. Well enough did the landlord know he had been there, but affecting the most complete ignorance, he invited them to look everywhere, being, he said, perfectly sure they would find no evil-disposed person in his domicile. It is, in fact, every man's duty to stand up for the honour of his own premises. How should there be anything bad under his roof? And we have all of us a gentle way of interpreting ourselves and our own actions, and are apt to imagine that people catch goodness by associating with us, as they do another complaint by coming into too close contact with Scotchmen. The event quite justified Mr. Tossopot's prediction, as the only individual, besides the family, whom the constables were able to ferret out, was Master Paul Pevensey. Him they questioned with much pertinacity, but without becoming much the wiser. They had noticed, they said, a light in the window on first coming up to the house—"why was it put out?"

"Because I can't sleep properly when there's candles in the room."

"But hadn't you been asleep before?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you put the candles out at first?"

"Because there was people here when I went to sleep, and they would have pitched pretty handsomely into me if I had attempted to leave them where Moses was when his candle went out."

"You're a saucy little vagabond," said one of the constables.

"Ditto," answered Paul, "minus the little."

"Neighbour," observed the leading man among the posse, "this lad is not the person we've come to seize in the Queen's name, be civil, therefore, and we may fish something out of him."

"Oh, oh," thought Paul, "don't you wish you may get it?"

The interrogatories were then resumed.

"Tell us, my little man, have you been sleeping all the evening by yourself?"

"No; I told you there was a great many people here when I first went to sleep."

"But afterwards?"

"Why, when I waked I found only one man left."

"And who was he?"

"Don't know."

"How long has he been gone?"

"Can't say—haven't got a watch."

"How was he dressed?"

"I was too sleepy to notice."

"What size was he?"

"Big enough to make a constable and a-half."

The superior functionary, who was very short, here stood in need of his philosophy. He bit his lips and proceeded.

"Did he talk with you?"

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"A great deal too much to remember."

"Did he hint anything about killing any person?"

"Why," answered Paul, "you must be witty people here in the North if your murderers go about pot-houses telling their secrets to little boys."

This produced a hearty laugh among the whole party, and Paul was asked no more questions. The constables soon afterwards departed, and Paul resuming his arm-chair, at length fell asleep again; and did not wake till late in the morning.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE GIBBET IN THE JARROW SLAKE.

It is altogether unnecessary for the purposes of the present narrative to trace any further the progress of the murderer; suffice it to say, that on the very day after he had effected his escape from the Jarrow, he was apprehended on the high road—conveyed to the county town, and there found guilty and executed. Considerable apprehension was felt during the whole course of the proceedings, that the insurgent colliers, numbering nearly five thousand, would burst into the town, and attempt at least the rescue of their marrow, which would have led to much confusion and slaughter. No effort could properly be said to have been made to pacify them; on the contrary, they were treated with peculiar harshness—driven forcibly from their cottages, and compelled to encamp in rude tents upon the moors; so that their feelings were exasperated to the highest pitch, and there was every day reason to fear an outbreak and collision with the military.

But it has often been remarked, that colliers habitually exhibit above ground little of that daring which distinguishes them in the pit. The glare of day, the bustle of ordinary life, the unusual sights and sounds by which they are surrounded, the vastness of the earth, and overhanging skies, literally bewilder them. Accustomed to a confined space, and to combat with invisible enemies, such as fiery gases, and pestilential miasmata, they feel out of their element when brought in contact with soldiers, or the servants of the law. Tamely, therefore, and patiently did they endure the execution of their unfortunate instrument, whose death broke up the association of assassins, which in its entire nature was foreign from the character of Englishmen. They assembled in dense masses on the plains; their tents rang with noise and shouting—they put themselves in menacing attitudes and marched wildly hither and thither, without any positive result. Conscious of their own weakness, they soon began secretly to regret the turbulent course they had adopted, and to wish themselves safely back at their subterranean employments.

The authorities, however, to give the last stroke to their humiliation, and prove to them the utter contempt in which they were held by the ruling classes—caused a lofty gibbet to be erected in the midst of the stream called the Jarrow Slake, and there hung the murderer's body in chains, to be torn and lacerated, and borne away piecemeal by the fowls of the air. The place they selected for this barbarous exhibition was exceedingly well adapted to the purpose. It was a spot where the river ran between two black rocks, which shelved somewhat abruptly on either side to the water's edge; while numerous gloomy ravines and gulleys brought down in rainy weather the additions made to the Jarrow by momentary tributaries. Here and there a few stunted bushes tried to grow on the ungrateful soil, but they looked sad and blackened, and their leaves dropped off long before they had felt the touch of autumn.

As the river in that place has little fall, the eye could scarcely detect in what direction it flows, so that in short reaches, it had the appearance of a stagnant pool. In its broad and sluggish bed, however, there are several small islets, flat, slimy, and slippery, and upon one of these the gibbet was erected—a monument little creditable to the civilisation of our times. We know, of course, that the corpse of a malefactor feels nothing, and that, therefore, excepting so far as the sentiments are concerned, it signifies little whether you suspend a bundle of rags upon the gibbet, or the clay which has contained the human spirit. But to the feeling of humanity it signifies very much. We attach a sort of veneration to the frame of man, and are saddened and displeased when we behold it thus thrust forward in the face of the open sky, to be preyed upon by kites and ravens, and as decomposition takes place, to drop like offal into the stream. The idea of such a punishment is unworthy of any period of civilisation, and proves, wherever it takes place, that the savage is not extinct in that community. It was with a mixture of dejection and fury that the colliers beheld the remains of their late companion thus gibbeted within sight of their tents; and the creaking of the irons, as the heavy corpse swung to and fro in the breeze, struck painfully on their hearts.

Paul was still kept a prisoner among them, though for what reason scarcely appeared; they had no longer anything to dread; the law had done its worst in the case of the only real crime committed, and they designed not to continue the contest; but they were highly indignant that their wretched comrade had been denied the common rites of humanity, and treated like one of those vermin that infest our rural districts. Fierce, therefore, and fiery were the denunciations which they uttered against those whom they styled their persecutors. Sometimes they congregated in vast masses, and with tumultuous shouts and yells uttered vows of vengeance; sometimes they met in little knots, and spoke together with hushed voices, discussing plans and projects into which Paul became initiated by degrees. He had now been removed from the public-house to the tent of a man named Daniel Filmer, who, though of a rude and boisterous character, was highly communicative, and seemed to experience some sort of interest in conversing with his little guest. He was somewhat advanced in years, had no children, and lived with his wife, a woman of about his own age, on those terms of rough sociability which might be expected from persons who, though attached to each other, were both ignorant, uncouth, and incapable of giving vent to their feelings, such as they were. Mrs. Filmer scarcely differed from her husband in appearance, being brawny and masculine by nature, and having worked all her lifetime in the pit. Paul almost fancied she had a beard, and her voice was as harsh and rough as her husband's. Why he was placed with this couple, except that they had no children, he could never learn; they wanted no services from him, though Mrs. Filmer did ask him occasionally to stir the pot, or fetch a little water from the Jarrow. When the gibbet, however, was set up, most persons felt an invincible repugnance to drink of that stream, especially from below where it stood; and you might therefore all day see colliers and their wives making weary journeys to distant rivulets, rather than resort to the polluted river.

One evening, as it was getting dusk, Mrs. Filmer asked Paul to fetch her a pitcher of water. He was not naturally lazy, but as the next rivulet was at least a mile and a half off, he determined to take his way to the Jarrow in preference, as the distance thither was not many hundred yards. Of approaching the gibbet he had no fear; it served him as a sort of land-mark, and he edged away to the right so as to reach the margin of the stream, which he did through a narrow gully a little above where it stood. It had been a fine day, and the evening was peculiarly delicious and balmy. A tinge of saffron still coloured the western sky, though the stars on the opposite side of the hemisphere had already made their appearance. A gentle breeze was blowing, just sufficiently powerful to give motion to the corpse on the gibbet, so that he could hear the creaking sound, which sent a sort of superstitious thrill to his frame. As he stood on the

rocky edge of the river, he put down his pitcher and, with highly-excited imagination, turned round towards where the ghastly object stood relieved against the sky. There it was, in constant undulating motion—swing, swing; creak, creak. His heart seemed to beat audibly, yet he advanced a step or two in the direction of the gibbet. He knew not why he was attracted towards it, yet still he advanced, till he fancied he heard a murmuring sound issuing from the rocks, and borne out slowly over the waters. Paul started—listened—what could it be? He was naturally brave, and late circumstances had rendered him doubly reckless. His curiosity urged him forwards till he observed something like the figure of a woman crouching amid the rocks. Paul, it may have been observed, always felt himself strongly attracted towards everything that belonged to the female sex, whom he respected generally, not being yet of an age to make distinctions or exceptions. He beheld something of Kate Pevensey in all other women, and secretly revered them for her sake. They seemed all, as it were, a part of his mother, whom he would at this moment have given his little life to clasp in his arms. As soon, therefore, as he saw the petticoat, all fear and hesitation were thrown aside; and walking boldly up to the crouching and moaning figure, he said—

“Ma’am, can I do anything for you?”

The woman started; and, lifting up her eyes, stared wildly in his face.

Paul repeated his question, in a most respectful and kindly voice:—

“Can I do anything for you, ma’am?”

It was an old woman, dressed meanly, but not sordidly. She was not what, in the insolent language of prosperity and the heyday of life, is denominated a beldame or a hag; she was a quiet old woman—poor enough, but neat and tidy. She burst forth into no wild imprecations as Paul addressed her—did not blaspheme God or utter curses against all mankind; she was a bereaved and desolate mother, and felt like one. Her only son swung on the gibbet before them, and her sorrows, it will readily be believed, were such as a mother’s heart can only know. Yet she did not rave, but touched by the gentle accents of Paul’s voice looked up, as I have said, and gazing rather wildly at him—in surprise, not in anger—replied to his second question as well as her sobs would let her:—

“God bless thee, my son; thou can’st not help me. I am a wretched old woman—hard upon threescore years and ten. I had a son, and nursed him myself; tenderly too, my boy, as thy mother nursed thee; and there they have hung him, and I am come here to cry and break an old woman’s heart. But when I am dead we shan’t be laid in the grave together, for they won’t take him down, though I begged of them to do it—on my knees.”

“By God, mother!” exclaimed Paul, his emotion betraying him into an oath, “but they shall take him down.”

“No, my boy; thou can’st not make them.”

“I wouldn’t have you answer for that, ma’am,” said he: “I tell you they shall, and that this very night, too, as sure as my name is Paul.”

The old woman looked incredulous; but Paul, taking her by the hand, said—

“Wait awhile, mother, and you shall see what can be done. I will be back with you presently.”

He then ran up along the margin of the river, filled his pitcher, and returned by the way he had come to Daniel Filmer’s tent.

“What’s the matter with thee, boy?” cried Dame Filmer, as he entered; “thou seemest quite flustered.”

Paul related what had happened to him.

“Ay, ay!” cried Mrs. Filmer; “go out and call Dan, and we shall see what the men will say to it.”

CHAPTER XXIX.—PAUL ENGAGES IN A DESPERATE ENTERPRISE.

WHEN Paul Pevensey left Mrs. Filmer to go in quest of Dan, the night had fairly set in; and calm and beautiful it was. Boys have seldom much notion of anything save the circumstances by which they are surrounded; but Paul had,

somehow, acquired the habit of turning his eyes upwards and looking into the heavens. Had he been a disciple of the astrologers, he could scarcely have cast more reverend or curious glances towards the stars. What they were and what their aspects imported to mortals, he could not tell, and perhaps never thought of inquiring; but his unsophisticated spirit appeared to be refreshed by gazing at their cold pearly light, which entered into his soul like a revelation from infinity. He might almost be said to feel twice as strong by night as by day. The sun's burning and brilliant rays, flooding the whole face of nature, seemed to eclipse his guardian angel, which reappeared as it were with the dews of evening, and came to him like one ever cherished and beloved by starlight. He now felt that he was bound on a good errand, and beholding a blazing fire out upon the moor beyond the tents, he imagined the colliers were gathered and gossiping round it, and that he should find Daniel Filmer there. His idea proved to be quite correct; Daniel's figure was among the first his eye lighted on, and calling him aside, he told him his wife wanted to speak with him immediately.

"Wait a minute," cried Dan, "I have just two words to say to Bob Lewis, and then I'll gang with thee."

The picturesque has long ago abandoned the polished and refined circles of society to take refuge among the lowest; with colliers, gipseys, trampers, beggars, smugglers, and handitti. Nothing could be more striking than the scene on which Paul gazed, while waiting the pleasure of Mr. Daniel Filmer. A vast fire, kindled and kept up with heath and furze bushes, was burning brightly on the moor, and around it in an irregular circle made up of innumerable small groups, some standing, others sitting, others couching, some talking and gesticulating, others lying down at their ease, with their arms crossed under their breasts, and their heads raised just to get a glimpse of the flames, were distributed some hundreds of colliers. Nothing could be more grotesque than their costume, or more outlandish than their countenances and the jargon they spoke. They were brawny, dusky, fierce-looking figures, with broad slouched hats, leather gaiters, Dutch breeches, and long jackets, thrown loosely back over the shoulders; most of them had large sticks in their hands, with which they played as they talked, or lay stretched in listless reverie. Several were seated cross legged, like Turks, upon the turf quietly smoking, and their pipes, the bowls of which now looked red, now dark, as the tubes were acted upon by the breath, sent forth numerous fragrant clouds into the air, which appeared to produce a soothing effect on all whom they enveloped.

"Now, my little man," said Filmer, when he had finished his argument, "I'll go with thee to my wife."

Paul was careful not to forestall by the way the communication of the dame, but walked on in silence beside his equally taciturn companion. When they reached the tent Mrs. Filmer related in her own way what Paul had seen, and repeated the promise he had made to the poor old woman, with whom they were both well acquainted. Dan reflected a while, and then said,—

"Some such notion has crossed me once or twice; I'll go out and see what the lads think of it, and be back presently."

Paul made as though he would have gone with him, but to this Daniel objected, saying—

"Nay, nay, thou art not a collier; stay here with my good dame, and I'll be back soon; what can be done shall be done for the poor unfortunate lad that's hung."

Mrs. Filmer now interposed:

"Eat thy supper first," said she to her husband. "Here it's all ready, smoking hot, and it will be spoilt by the time thee com'st back."

"I can't," cried Dan, "my stomach's full: what thou hast told me will do instead of supper. I must away to the lads, and after that I shall be hungry enough, I warrant thee."

The poor are often sparing of their breath, either because they have not much to say, or because hardships render them churlish. The dame made no reply,

but stood with Paul at the tent door, looking after her husband as he slouched away, and disappeared in the distance. He was a long while absent; the broth boiled over into the fire twice or thrice; the embers below grew dull; and it seemed likely that the whole night would thus be wasted in expectation. She therefore took the ladle, filled two basins, one for Paul and one for herself, and putting a spoon into each, sat down on a stool close to the open door, and, beginning to eat, invited Paul to follow her example. Our hero immediately commenced, nothing loth; few things took away his appetite, he could eat sleeping or waking, sick or well, in bed or out of it; he therefore pitched into his broth in great style, and having cleared a first and a second basin, felt quite in the humour for an adventure. Presently they heard the tramp of many feet coming down the broad avenue between the tents, and soon Daniel Filmer appeared at the head of some thousand or fifteen hundred men, armed with pick-axes, crow-bars, bludgeons, and some few muskets. There were those also who carried pikes, but their number was exceedingly small. One individual bore a long ladder on his shoulder, the use of which Paul could not fail to understand. Slipping between the tents, and getting out upon the moor considerably in advance of the cavalcade, he ran with all his might to inform the old woman that his promise was about to be fulfilled. He found her sitting where she had sat before, and when he had said his say she repeated her former words:

"God bless thee, my son."

"I hope he will, ma'am," said Paul, "and it's a good sign that I have your blessing. I've a mother myself, I believe, ma'am, though I never had no father, and if I can't do her a good turn I hope somebody else's son will do it for me. But here the men come, and you will see if I don't keep my promise."

And sure enough as he spoke the colliers approached in dense masses, covering the rocks like swarms of bees, and creeping down with a low suppressed murmur to the water's edge. As they drew near the spot opposite where the gibbet stood, on its small island, far out in the river, an involuntary imprecation burst from the whole multitude; they wished the law and its functionaries in the bottomless pit, and had it been in their power would forthwith have sent them thither. However, the point now being to defeat their purpose, they consulted about the best means of traversing the stream, which in that place was of considerable depth. Six or eight good swimmers soon volunteered to undertake the task, and stripping in an instant, plunged into the water, one of the most powerful dragging the ladder after him. I have already remarked that there was no perceptible current in this part of the Jarrow, so that the multitude could observe the heads of the swimmers advance in a straight line towards the gibbet. The old woman had at first stood like one stupified by the unexpected arrival of the multitude, but when her voice returned to her she showered blessings on all around, shedding at the same moment tears of bitterness and joy.

"What a while!" cried Filmer—just look! They are reaching the rock,—they are landing upon it; and see they are putting up the ladder—it will soon be done. But what!—the man comes down, something has happened; he sees the sodgers, or else his heart fails him. What can be the matter?"

"I wish I could swim," said Paul, "I'd go over and see."

"Look," observed a bystander, "Here's a man swimming back from the rock; we shall soon learn what's amiss."

The colliers, eager and excited, crowded down to the river's brink, each straining his eyes to catch a glimpse of the swimmer's head, and torturing his imagination to conjecture what it was that brought him back. He swam well, but the distance was considerable, and minutes under such circumstances appeared to be expanded into hours. The unhappy mother of the murderer pressed forward, and literally stood in the water, advancing as far as the depth would allow her.

"What is it? Oh, what has happened?" exclaimed she; "they'll not take him down, they'll leave my son there to be eaten up by kites and ravens. Oh, God! they'll not take him down!"

"Yes they will, ma'am," answered Paul; "and if they can't I'll go over and

take him down myself, if any one will carry me to the rock, for I can't swim."

It is curious to analyse the feelings of men: at such moments every one appears to give himself a different explanation of what he sees, and the throng of doubts, guesses, hopes, and fears which takes up the mind, can hardly be described. Very few minutes were really consumed by the swimmer in his passage from the rock to the shore; but every stroke of his arms as he plunged forward seemed to be performed with a slowness which their impatience regarded as almost supernatural. At length, however, he came within hail.

"What's the matter?" cried hundreds of voices at once.

The man murmured some reply, which no one caught distinctly.

"What is it?" was again shouted by them all; and the swimmer's answer was again lost.

"Damn the fellow, why doesn't he speak out?" exclaimed Filmer, with vehemence.

"He does speak out, sir," said Paul; "but you make so much noise that you can't hear him. However, I think I caught a glimpse of his meaning; he says the ladder's broke."

"The devil it is," cried Filmer; "then what's to be done?"

Presently the man came close to the shore, and called out distinctly—

"The ladder's broke."

A consultation was now held, while he landed and sat down on the bank, to rest himself. Upon inquiry, it was found that the ladder had not actually snapped off, but merely cracked, so that it could not support the weight of a man.

"But it would hold me," cried Paul.

"So it would, my boy," cried Filmer; "so off with your things and leap in."

"I can't swim," answered Paul.

Several swimmers now came forward, each offering to bear him over on his shoulders. It was at length agreed, however, that he should lean his breast upon a piece of wood, and that two men should advance, one on either side of him, and push the spar along. This was done; and Paul, keeping firm hold of the plank, was by degrees floated to the foot of the gibbet, where the naked colliers stood shivering on the rock; for though it was a warm, balmy night, they were so little accustomed to be exposed unclad to the external air, especially after having been soused in cold water, that their teeth chattered as if it had been a hard frost. As Paul landed on the slimy rock, he could not avoid casting a hurried glance at the extraordinary scene around him—the broad, placid river reflecting from its surface the images of the stars, the gibbet above and the rocky shore on either hand, covered on one side with masses of human beings, the sound of whose voices came wildly across the stream. A file was now put into his hands; the slender ladder was turned the cracked side outward; and having been planted, almost upright, against the gibbet, Paul was directed to ascend cautiously, and when at the top to file away the links of the chains by which the body was fastened to the cross-tree; a cord was likewise given him by which to ease down the mass, when it should be fairly detached from the gibbet.

It is greatly to be feared that our hero, at this point of our narrative, will sink lower than ever in the estimation of fastidious people; but what is to be done? I have pledged myself to relate the truth, and if he really was engaged in detaching a corpse from a gibbet, it is not my business to conceal the fact. I have all along felt the difficult situation in which I have placed myself, by undertaking to follow the fortunes of a young wayward vagabond of this description, a slave to all his impulses, good or bad, and always ready at the bidding of one of the opposite sex to hazard anything and everything. He now fancied himself to be doing a good action, because he was endeavouring to console a poor old woman, whose only child had degenerated into a malefactor, and paid the last penalty of the law. Paul was, of course, a wretched casuist; he thought it could do the law no good to hang the corpse of the poor creature's son in

chains; he therefore cheerfully ran the risk of breaking his neck, for the gratification of his philanthropy, whether mistaken or not; and I trust that if the reader be disposed to find fault, his sense of justice will induce him to visit the blame on Paul, not on me.

With this caveat, I proceed to say that our hero, after climbing cautiously up the shattered and trembling ladder, which was held in its place by five or six colliers, reached the top, and began to stretch his hands out towards the chains which supported the murderer's corpse. He was unfortunately gifted with a keen scent, and the stench which issued from the decomposing body almost caused him to start back; in which case he would have fallen headlong from the ladder and been dashed to pieces. He therefore held on by the chain and began to file away, the men from below exhorting him to use all diligence, for they were almost perishing from cold. At length the near chain snapped under the file, and swung off with so much violence towards the extremity of the cross-tree that it made the gibbet reel again, and suggested to Paul's mind the idea that the whole mass might give way and tumble with him into the Jarrow. What he had begun, however, he determined to complete at all hazards; so climbing up upon the projecting beam he crawled out towards its extremity and began to file away as before. In his haste he forgot to fix the cord to the body, and indeed had he thought of it, his strength would have been unequal to the task of lowering it gradually; he therefore proceeded without thinking of the consequences; considerably hastened by the unsavoury smell which constantly assailed his nostrils. While thus engaged he heard a slight noise behind him, which made his blood run cold; it was a rustling, odd, indescribable sound, which evidently did not come from the earth or from the water, but proceeded from the gibbet itself. For some moments he could not muster courage to turn round, but sat still, while the cold sweat burst forth over his whole frame; at length, however, his natural intrepidity returning to him, he faced about, and there beheld an immense raven standing on the crest of the gallows. His apprehensions now forsook him.

"If that's all," said he, in a low whisper, "you may stay there, old fellow, and amuse yourself, while I get on with my work." Two or three vigorous efforts more severed the chain, and down went the body of the malefactor bang into the river, while the colliers both on the rocks and the shore involuntarily set up a loud shout. Paul descended the ladder, the raven slowly making way for him as he moved towards it; on the rock he received all manner of thanks from the colliers, who immediately conveyed him on shore in the same way that they had brought him, while two of their number having recovered the corpse with the cord which had dropped from Paul's hand, towed it slowly towards the expecting multitude, who continued to express their triumph by shouts and acclamations. The law had so far been defeated; but now that they had got the body, what was to be done with it?

THE INFLUENCE OF AMBITION ON HAPPINESS.

AMBITION is one of those feelings of the human breast which may become a virtue or a vice. It contains within itself in most cases, the elements of discontent, since it never leads a man to rest satisfied with his condition in life. There are, of course, various kinds of ambition: there is the ambition to be wealthy—to be great and powerful—and that ambition without which man is not an estimable being, the desire to excel in goodness; to be considered a Christian member of society, fulfilling his duties with honour to himself and the Almighty. But it is that kind more especially which teaches man to grasp at an indefinite amount of power and greatness with which we have at present to deal. There is doubtless something ennobling in the feeling of ambition—something which awakens our admiration, in spite of the evil effects which it often exercises upon society. It is naturally kindled in the mind of youth by his very earliest studies. He looks back on the records of the past, and cannot fail to perceive that through its influence the greatest deeds have been accomplished; by it the fate of empires has been swayed; by its concentrated efforts the rise and decline of nations has been brought about. Over the whole world lie scattered monuments which speak of the ambitious nature of man; history is full of brief allusions to wild and restless spirits, who grasped at all and obtained not half of what they desired. Over the gloom of the past, in whose bosom lie enrolled the records of the deeds of so many millions, some brilliant rays are scattered which cannot be obscured. They are the memories of those who dared to step forward and proclaim by their actions their soul's desire to rise superior to the common herd of mankind. They have most of them accomplished something, but could their silent spirits step forth from the grave and speak once more, they would still tell of some half-accomplished desire, some uncompleted task, something of which they had dreamed, some favourite project yet unperformed. The life of an ambitious man is too brief; from the cradle to the grave he lives in the notion that eternity of action is before him. He forgets that, when at the summit of his earthly glory—when, radiant with hope and bounding with energy, he is surrounded with the gilded halo of power, that a cold form must soon brush by, and cast a shadow upon all the glittering scene. Then there is no more attraction for him; a bitter taste is in every joy, and the picture of the past presents only a series of laborious steps—to what?—Half-accomplished aims.

Let, however, the past show what pictures it may of unfulfilled wishes, the future will infallibly unfold the same. As long as the race of man shall inhabit the earth, there will be found ambitious spirits among them. History will display the same records of desired aggrandisement and hopes unfulfilled. The nature of man inclines him to imitate the actions of his ancestors, or rather he is inspired by their example to do similar deeds himself. The young man's heart pants for the same eulogiums as have been bestowed upon others. He hangs on the relation of their deeds, witnesses with a kind of pain the non-fulfilment of their hopes, and is readily persuaded by the sophistry of his own heart that, if he attempt to rise, and accomplish great things, he will not, cannot fail; "For," he argues, "fortune has made an exception in my favour." Nor is he undeceived until, after long years of aspiration, long years of toil, he finds himself in the same situation he was at starting.

We must, however, before we proceed further, decide what ambition is. The word is generally used in a bad sense for an immoderate or illegal pursuit of power. It also signifies a passion never to be satisfied, to which each trifling success offers a further incentive, until it magnifies into an overpowering degree and becomes the master passion of the heart. Like the grain of mustard seed, it is a small thing at first, but it grows and ripens, and spreads, until it forms a

fine tree, beneath whose shade many may repose. Its branches extend around to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. Its rounded top shows no decided tendency upwards, but spreads over the things of the earth.

What is it but a chase after a vain thing? The ambitious man is restless, brooding, discontented. An undefined hope urges him forward to something shadowed forth in the unformed future, something which he imagines will satisfy him. There is a goal to be reached. A fever agitates his veins. The point is gained. It is well. But—there is a but—what is that brighter goal still beyond? What is that glorious spot far away? A pleasant landscape spreads beyond. The position he occupies is full of the elements of happiness; but there is something higher. On once more he flies. Thus for ever! Position after position is gained. Still there is another step. Arrived at the summit of one mountain, another and another is discovered, rising one behind each other; some burying their lofty summits in white mist, others whose giddy height cannot be even guessed at.

We are far from contending against the principle, the mere passion of ambition. To do so would be to seek to produce a wrong impression upon our readers. To a certain extent we admire ambition. We pity the man utterly devoid of it, and consider him a poor weak thing, incapable of exertion, incapable of enjoying the benefits which God has mercifully placed within his reach. We admire the aspiring tendency of the mind which aims at securing some higher position from whence to shed down its light upon the world. There is something morally elevating and praiseworthy in the desire to rise. But what we blame is the folly—nothing else can it be called—which urges a man to that desperate kind of ambition which leads him to grasp at what can never be his. He takes too lofty a point of elevation. Those born in a moderate station may possibly rise, and often do so, to a very high eminence. But there are certain concomitants required in most instances to make it practicable. In this country patronage, friends, money, are required; and proudly as the ambitious man would scorn the idea of patronage, he must take home to his bosom this unwelcome truth, that without a certain amount of patronage he cannot accomplish his desires. A few examples may be culled from the past—nay, from the present, too, of a person having risen by his own unaided efforts. Many rise from a poor station to a very comfortable one, but in most instances some fortunate chance has presided over the dawn of those who come to greatness—some accident which the next generation may not witness again.

Ambition, tempered by reflection, is a very good thing; but without it, it is a feverish chain, dragging man forward to an unprofitable goal. Hundreds of examples may be brought forward of its ruinous consequences. No one who has had an opportunity of witnessing its all-powerful effects can fail to perceive the truth of what we urge.

To check the disposition to too great an indulgence in their feelings young persons should at a very early age have instilled into them the lesson of content. Could they but feel how calm an influence it exerts upon the mind, they would look with little concern upon the temptations offered them by ambition. It is, carried to extent, a most dangerous feeling; spreading by degrees, it exerts for a time an almost imperceptible sway over the soul, and instead of bringing young men to habits of settled study, sways them to and fro; they lean now to one thing, now to another. Now history claims their attention, now they have a passion for poetry, now huge doses of philosophy are swallowed with avidity, now rhetoric, logic, are devoured. They contemplate all mankind, all greatness, all power, all study, all learning, envy all these things, and desire to embrace them in one grasp and concentrate them in themselves. They must excel every one else; they must unite the student with the polished gentleman. The lonely inhabitant of the library, the watcher by the midnight lamp, must be the observed of all observers whither soever he goes. Relieved from the confines of study, or rather tired of the restrictions it imposes upon him, he seeks his books with less delight. His ambition has taught him to grasp at

too much, and he is disappointed. What restless fever is it that consumes him night and day? 'Tis no longer learning but power he aims at. He is not sought as he imagined, fortune does not select him for its favoured child, and moroseness settles upon him, blighting his energies, and chilling his best feelings. Let us take from the numerous instances at hand one only, which offers as striking an example as any we have ever met with.

Henry Vere, was a young man, of poor but unexceptionable family. An University education bestowed upon him aroused his most ambitious feelings. The son of a clergyman, who had stinted the rest of the family in necessities in order to send him to Oxford, the church had been his destiny from infancy; but Vere had inherited from his father an ambitious spirit, and though in him he had seen fully exemplified the hollowness of indulging it, he suffered his mind to take a still more stirring bias. Political aggrandisement was his aim. If ever he had asked himself what happiness was, he would have answered that it lay in attaining the summit of political power. Of obstacles he never dreamed. His spirit was untiring, his energy indomitable. To gain the goal for which his soul panted he would sacrifice health, rest, comfort of every kind. There was the goal—how was it to be reached? In his young dreams a wealthy alliance floated before his imagination—this was the first step; and to doubt that he, with his accomplishments, his manners, his conversation, even without fortune, was to be resisted, was a thing that never entered his head. A situation procured by favour for him in London as private secretary to a gentleman of rank threw him much into the very circle in which he wished to move. This was one step gained. But where was the welcome he expected? Cold looks greeted him from high-born dames, who with daughters on their hands, were anxious to obtain for them a more splendid alliance than Lord G——'s private secretary, be he never so fascinating or so accomplished. Beauty floated by him. He gazed upon one fair face after another, and sighed as he beheld the crowd of admirers which thronged around them; he was not undaunted, however, he trusted to his own power too much to be downcast. At length, one day, he beheld a beautiful girl glide under the protection of her father into Lord G——'s drawing-room; she was a fair, sweet, mild, young creature, robed in white, with a profusion of golden ringlets. Many sought her hand in the dance, and he among the rest. She was as intelligent as she was lovely, yet mild as a Madonna. For the first time Henry Vere felt that he was in love; he saw her again and again; she must be of the highest rank, he said when he first saw her, and, in his favour be it spoken, he never thought of it again. For a while ambition was forgotten, the best feelings of his heart were enlisted, and she became his daily, hourly dream. Time went on; emboldened by his apparent success, he sought her society more and more. At length he inquired concerning her family of some one likely to know; she was the daughter of a retired officer in the army, and almost as poor as she was lovely. Here, then, was the *finale* to his hopes; he could not compromise his future by such an alliance—no, it was impossible. He absented himself from her society, but the struggle was vain. Every future scheme was at last given way to; he forgot ambition, forgot his brilliant hopes, returned to the pursuit of Annie Seaton, and at length their marriage was agreed on.

Now was a change made in Henry Vere's fortune; a situation abroad was offered him, and with his bride he quitted England. For a while all went well, he was devotedly attached to his young wife, spent his whole time in her society, wondered how he could have ever dreamt of ambition, and made a thousand domestic plans. But the crisis was coming; a friend in England hastily wrote to offer him a government appointment at home, once more dreams of aggrandisement floated over his mind, domestic happiness was become less attractive—a stirring picture spread itself before his excited imagination, the whole circle of society in England was awaiting him with open arms; he must return, he would be *fêted*, received as he deserved, and in a few years be made prime minister of England!

He returned. The appointment was given. It threw him into a new circle. Society was fascinating, his wife was more occupied than she had formerly been, and he found himself plunging into a giddy vortex of fashionable society; he argued, "It is necessary that I do this for her sake—for the sake of my children." He was in a comfortable position; his villa at Richmond was the most tasteful in the world, and yet after a year or two it seemed too small; still his circumstances did not permit him to change. His wife was satisfied; she was happy with her children, and he put up with it still; but Vere was a changed man—his ambition had slumbered; it now awoke with redoubled vigour, he became restless, uneasy, morose; he aimed at being considered the first whither soever he went. Society, he thought, scarcely appreciated him. The happy, peaceful, domestic hours he had spent with his wife in the early years of their marriage were fled; in vain was a return of these hoped for by her, society absorbed him entirely. A higher post was vacant, he applied for it—weeks flew on—no answer; at length a negative came. Here was the first blow, but it only made him more eager; he was ever on the watch—he was feverish, restless, discontented, no peace was in his mind, content was banished, day and night his dream was aggrandisement—others rose, why should not he? His wife's health became delicate, her form wasted visibly away; but his eye saw it not. Consumption had taken a firm hold upon her before he understood the change; she concealed it from him while she was able; she saw and pitied his weakness, and forbore to remonstrate with him. At length two situations were offered him, one abroad, one at home, infinitely more lucrative, and more likely to lead the way to future fame. Blinded by his desire to rise, he did not perceive the anxiety with which his wife watched his wavering between the two. She hoped that away from the busy scenes of politics his mind would be at ease, and that he would pass the few last years of his life at peace and in quietness. As might be expected, he chose the one in England. Now nothing seemed to stand in his way—the goal once gained, he would quit the busy scene and return to his home. Day after day brought fresh attractions; he was in constant communication with his friends; society had more charms for him than ever. But the story is soon told. Suddenly his wife died; and, one by one, her three children; and thus he was left alone to contend with his greatness. Had he an object now? No; the ambitious man, when he beheld these household gods fade, one by one, felt that he only knew their value when they were gone! Grief, however, passed—the wound closed—and he found himself again seeking after excitement. Suddenly came a change of ministry, and in one night all was over—the ambitious man was restored to his first position in society! He was without hope; the friends who had supported him were powerless, and nothing was to be expected from them. Suddenly renouncing all his schemes, he retired into the country on a small annuity; and there he remained, a peevish, discontented, soured old man, to the day of his death.

What did he gain? The answer is soon given. Nothing—but lost much; for though he once yielded to the dictates of his heart, he sacrificed afterwards all the purest feelings of his nature upon the shrine of ambition. He sacrificed his home, his happiness, his wife, his children—all to his one absorbing passion. And when the hour of death came, unwelcome thoughts must have intruded—vain regrets must have filled his mind—memories of opportunities neglected, time thrown away, must have arisen. Earthly riches he had sought—perishable baubles!—and earthly sorrow and remorse was his reward. A temperate pursuit after position would have left him worthy of esteem.

No ambitious man was ever a domestic one. Imperceptibly the former dries up the less vehement feelings. Let him flatter himself in youth as he may that he is capable of uniting them together, of blending opposite principles of action, he cannot, will not do it. He must give himself wholly to the pursuit of ambition—forget all else. It is the bane of domestic happiness. There is not, cannot be, continual excitement round the domestic hearth. The light that shines there is a pure but steady one. Virtues flourish peaceably.

Year after year fresh flowers are added to the parterre—blue eyes and sunny brows reflect the images of the fathers and mothers; sweet voices mingle in harmonious concert; lisping words break the silence. The mother is among them, and gentle counsel flows in streams of love around. And this picture from day to day repeated is too quiet for the ambitious man. It is beautiful but still. The sight that would kindle the man of more contented disposition into gratitude and love to God falls coldly upon the heart of the busy seeker after power. He looks, he smiles; sometimes a struggling ray of affection calls him among them. But it is over in a moment. There are things to be done; work to be done. He must not be found at home idle. Thus, though at first he may find a certain degree of happiness in the consciousness of loving and being loved, the ambitious man may rest assured such happiness cannot last. He must choose between domestic joy and the pursuit of his favourite passion. One or the other must be given up. He should be satisfied with what yields him such unmixed delight, and should pass singly through the world, divested of all ties. To live from day to day in the discontented and unceasing pursuit of a distant tempting prospect is incompatible with home happiness. Those who understand least the pernicious influence of the passion laud it most earnestly.

Certainly, we once more repeat, a certain amount of ambition is desirable. It urges man on in life to obtain that station most befitting his energies. What we inveigh against, is that inveterate pursuit of an unattainable object which runs through every action of a man's life, urges him to renounce the purest delights we can call our own, neglect those bound to him by the nearest ties, forget the mission with which he is charged, and imagine that he is sent into this world solely to minister to his own gratification, pursue his own course, unmindful of the high and important functions he is called upon to exercise towards his fellow men.

THE ZINGARA.

PART THE FIRST.

THE gipsy maiden sat reclin'd
Upon a grassy mound,
Her hood of silk was backward thrown,
Her dark eye sought the ground.

The orange trees unheeded deck'd
Her hair with blossoms sweet,
Unheeded did the mountain stream
Run bubbling at her feet.

A nightingale, who long had fill'd
With melody the wood,
Now fearless perch'd upon her hand,
So thoughtful was her mood.

O, is it of the silver crown,
That soon shall bind her brow,
When wedded to the gipsy king,
On which she ponders now?

And of that gorgeous festival,
Which she so soon shall grace,
Held with the wild barbaric pomp
Of the Zingari race?

Or dreams she of the gallant knight,
Who haunts this spot of late;
And of the ruby ring he gave
When last she read his fate?

And does she think of the abyss,
Which yawns so fearfully,
Between a young Zingari maid,
And a knight so fair and free?

No!—strange and unconnected forms
Are flitting through her brain;
She kens not why they hover round—
Those visions dark and vain.

Vaguely they come—by day, by night,
Still ever varying;
And scenes half hid in clouds of mist
Before her mind's eye bring.

Once she essay'd the witch-wife's art,
And her young blood ran cold,
As o'er her face the sybil's eye
With hellish meaning roll'd.

"Is it thy transmigrated love,"
She said, with hollow tone,
"Which pines and lingers o'er the past?—
And now, rash maid, begone!

And is it so?—did she once dwell
Within that marble hall,
With those grim shades of warriors
That now her soul appal?

And did she sit beside that fount,
And watch its falling showers;
Then steal amid the scented groves,
And pluck the orange flowers?

And did she hang, with sobs and tears,
Upon a mailed knight,
And clasp his knees in wild despair,
As he went forth to fight?

The maiden press'd her little hand
Upon her throbbing brow—
"Those wild illusions of the past,
Would they were banish'd now!

"And that young knight—why comes he thus
For ever at my side?
Must I not, ere this moon has wan'd,
Become the gipsy's bride?"

The startled bird was scar'd away—
What meant the thrill she felt,
When at her feet, with sparkling eyes,
The young Count Claros knelt?

"Maiden! upon this spot yestreen
Thou read'st my destiny;
I want no wealth—no high-born dame,
Give but this hand to me."

PART THE SECOND.

The gipsy maiden stands within
An arch'd and lofty hall,
And accents of contempt and wrath
On the Zingara fall.

And murmurs of her hateful crime—
The crime of sorcery—
And how her dreadful punishment
The stake and brand must be.

Her crime was, how she had enthrall'd,
With spells of fearful might,
Egyptian arts, and love potions,
A young and noble knight.

She stood entranc'd—she scarcely breath'd—
She felt as in a dream—
Yet all familiar to her love,
In that old hall did seem.

'Twas strangely wild—she could not tell
She had been there before,
And seen proud knights and warriors
Tread on that marble floor.

And what to her was death? To fly
The hated gipsy king;
To be perchance a butterfly,
And soar on painted wing;

Or prison'd in some gladsome bird,
To spend her little hour
In hovering round her much-lov'd knight,
Or warbling near his bower.

Thus ponder'd she, while on her car
The fatal death- doom rung;
A heavy step approach'd, and then
The portal backward swung.

A knight, accoutred from the wars,
Pass'd through that portal wide;
"Now, welcome, welcome, brother dear,"
The Lord Montalban cried.

"Long hast thou sworn a deadly hate
To this Zingari race;
A child—thy lovely, only one—
They tore from thy embrace.

And now this curs'd Egyptian maid
Shall dearly rue the hour
In which she held my noble son
Beneath her demon power."

The gipsy maiden rais'd her eyes—
One wild, one phrenzied shriek—
The memory of things gone by
Upon her seem'd to break.

She sprung and clasp'd the warrior's knees,
And kiss'd them o'er and o'er;
Then in a deadly swoon she lay
Upon the marble floor.

"O give her air!" the knight exclaimed,
"Undo her silken vest."

'Twas done—and lo! upon her neck
A red rose was impress'd.

"It is my child! my Inez dear!
Of whom I was bereft;
My only pledge of early love!"
And the stern warrior wept.

One year within a convent's walls
The Lady Inez pray'd,
While offerings to each holy shrine,
And vows for her were made.

Another year—she knelt before
The altar as a bride;
The fairest one in proud Seville,
And Claros by her side.

THE REVELATIONS OF A MESS-TABLE.

By W. H. MAXWELL, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON," "STORIES OF WATERLOO," &c.

CHAPTER II.

THE COLONEL'S STORY.

It was a sweet June morning when the quick step of a military party was heard at the entrance of the village street; and presently, the light company of the — th entered the market-place, halted, and piled arms. The first sounds of the bugle, which told the near approach of the expected detachment, peopled the doors and windows of every house with the whole of its inhabitants; and when the videts, who preceded the main body, wheeled round the corner, there was not an absentee from inspection of the new comers as they marched past, excepting a bed-ridden old gentlewoman, and the parson, who was *hors de combat* in the gout. The village senators wiped their spectacles to enjoy a better stare; and the tears that still lingered in the eyes of beauty were hastily dried, to enable divers of the fair sex, severely crossed in love, to determine whether the fresh arrivals could hold a candle to the dear fellows, whose drum and fife had heralded their departure at cock-crow, by playing them out of Willesdean with that afflicting air called "The Girl I left behind me."

The village which this military party came to occupy consisted of a single street. It was straight, broad, and at either side, furnished with a row of full-grown lime trees. The situation of Willesdean was extremely pretty. Standing in a cultivated valley, it was partially surrounded by a mountain range, changing by degrees from green pasturage to brown heath, until the summit of the heights was topped by moss-hags and grey shingle, marking that sterility which refuses sustenance to any animal but a goat.

The village itself was much neater than Irish villages generally are. The houses were well thatched, the windows glazed, the walls whitened, and their wood-work in good repair. It had its church, its mill, its river, and its bridge; and all were picturesque and in good keeping. Altogether, Willesdean was a superior quarter; and, compared to Ballaghmagran—a collection of sooty cabins with a mass-house, situated in a boundless bog beyond the mountains,—and garrisoned (as Willesdean was) by a company of the same regiment, the similitude might be considered favourable to the former, as Canterbury to Kamschatka.

Only one local remark will be necessary, the military occupation of both villages was recent and temporary. The violence of a wild mountain population, engaged in the demoralising trade of trafficking in, and distilling illicit whisky, having rendered the civil power unequal to repress it, the Government granted military assistance—and two companies were detached to protect the gaugers in their forays, and discharge a duty harrassing to a serious extent, and ruinous to the morals and the discipline of a soldier. In Willesdean the detachment were billeted on the inhabitants—while their officers had a private lodging in joint occupancy.

Wild as the people and the mountain district were, the neighbourhood was fortunately uncursed by any party associations. Although the heavy impost placed by the revenue on spirituous liquors, had offered a temptation to the peasantry too great to be overcome, and the drunkenness attendant upon private distillation, had too often led to riots, which usually terminated in bloodshed, and sometimes in loss of life, still the character of the population was the reverse of being truculent. No deliberate act of assassination was even dreamed of, and,

with a generous feeling creditable to the mountaineers, the magistrate who, the week before, in discharge of duty, had made a conviction that consigned a dozen of their kindred and companions to the county jail, if wayfaring or grouse shooting in the wildest gorge among the hills, would be treated with respect, and welcomed to rest and refresh himself in the cabin of the delinquent he had sent to prison.

About mid-distance in their march the relieving and returning companies met, and they halted for ten minutes on the road; two officers were attached to either party, and when they stepped apart to hold a passing chat, the light bobs made numerous inquiries from their companions touching the new quarters they were marching to—and the battalion men gave their comrades all the information in their power, enumerated by name and description such young ladies that evinced a *penchant* for military life, declared Willedean an earthly paradise—asserting that for beauty and poteine whisky its equal could not be found beyond the Shannon. Kind remembrances were sent by the new comers to divers too-confiding women, who had listened to these false levanters, and, as a consequence, been left lamenting; while rough badinage and hearty laughter were joyously interchanged on all sides.

Apart from the soldiery, and at a distance which secured their conversation from being overheard, the four gentlemen of the sword in command of the halted companies, were making and receiving answers to similar inquiries.

"Are the natives tolerably civilised?" inquired Captain Talbot of the commander he was *en route* to relieve.

"You will find, in the only two with whom you may hold intimate relations, in their respective walks, a couple of jewels above price; and were I upon corporal oath called upon to estimate their relative merits, between the parson and the guager, a feather would turn the scale. A better impersonation of genuine hospitality never waddled up the aisle of a country church than the worthy vicar—and the exciseman is an excellent fellow, with whom you can do anything you please. If there be within a day's march one jar of poteine better than another, count upon its being slipped into your lodgings quietly after dark; and the beauty of the thing is, that nobody can even guess where these faery favours come from. As to his reverence—dine with him four days in the week, and he will feel obliged; make the number six, and I'll take long odds but you figure handsomely in his last will and testament. The holy porpoise is laid by the heels at present—but the moment he can mount a gouty shoe, take my word that you will be under his mahogany instantler. As to the rest—the bourgeois are extremely civil, and the priest is inoffensive. There is an attorney located in the place, but, thank God! he is ruined for want of practice; while the salubrity of the village has prevented its only medical practitioner from investing any property in the stocks."

"The men will be comfortably billeted, the colonel mentioned to me this morning, as we left the barrack; but what sort of a den, in right of succession, are Egerton and I fated to take possession of?"

"Den!" exclaimed Barrymore: "Saints and angels, was there ever such profanation! Out with thy tool, Tom, and no matter the loss of the commission attendant upon drawing on a superior officer," he said, addressing the young ensign who accompanied him: "Den! Holy St. Anthony, to call the home of beauty—the two-storied thatched house in which loveliness is located—that domicile, compared with which the Paphian Bower would have proved a dog-kennel—to call that a den! Draw, Tom; out with thy fox, man—the offence must be obliterated in blood!"

Egerton laughed.

"Does Willedean indeed contain such beauty? I think, Talbot, if it be so, after this warning, we had better not venture into this bower of Calypso. Cannot another and a safer lodging be obtained?"

"Why, not conveniently. Poor Edwards, as you may remark, is inconsolable—you could have heard his sighs a musket-shot off, as we passed the house—and

while the weather-cock was visible on the steeple-point, he looked dolorously back, and muttered Rosabella! I should not be surprised, through the witcheries of that blue-eyed girl, that our friend Tom desperately resolved on matrimony at seventeen—immediately sent in his papers, and was called next Sunday in the parish church. What a loss the service would thus sustain!—a future Field Marshal extinguished for love of an apothecary's daughter."

"And who may this beauty be?"

"The old man's only child whose habitation you are about to occupy. Talbot, as I strongly suspect, has passed the age of folly, and cut his wisdom teeth—but take heed, Egerton; none, at thy inflammatory stage of life, will look on Rosa Barlow with impunity. Come, we had better be toddling on. Fall in, men!"

In a minute both companies were under arms, and resumed their march—each with the usual addition of two or three baggage-carts, heavily loaded with miscellaneous property, chests, camp furniture, carpet-bags, and portmanteaus, women, children, setters, greyhounds, a most venerable goat, and a tamed eagle.

Leaving the detachments on their march, we will briefly introduce the *dramatis personæ* of a melancholy tale, premising that the whole are located under the roof-tree of the village doctor. To the soldiers we will give precedence—and simply state that the commanding officer, Captain Talbot, was a stout, straightforward Irish gentleman, slightly given to duelling, considerably to potecine punch, but tremendously attached to tobacco. His lieutenant was a person altogether different—Egerton was of high family, and he had much latent ancestral pride and pretension, which, however, he had good sense enough to keep out of sight. For one holding his high position in society, he was poor; while to rare personal advantages, he united polished manners and an insinuating address. Far from being a *roué*, he was nevertheless a spoiled man—and although scarcely twenty-two, had Egerton been what he was not, a braggart, he might have plumed himself on a long list of early conquests.

Doctor Barlow was not a native of the Emerald Isle—but for some twenty years Ireland had been his adopted country. In middle life he had crossed the Channel, assistant surgeon to a Scotch fencible regiment—and, upon its reduction, married a young woman of lowly birth, whose pretensions were confined to personal beauty and exemplary conduct. His own exterior was not prepossessing—his figure was tall, thin, and bony—and the hardness of feature peculiar to the Highlands, would have, at a single glance, betrayed his birth-place. Cold in his manners, almost to sternness, he appeared one of those unsocial beings who hold no kindly community with their fellow men. But "sweetest nut has sourest rind—" and under a repulsive covering, a feeling heart was latent. The humblest villager had never been refused the professional assistance of Doctor Barlow; and poverty, were the call urgent, always took precedence of more profitable patients. The Doctor was well stricken in years, for he had passed middle life a bachelor. He never left the village but when his services were required elsewhere—a few miles bounded the extent of his wanderings—his heart was in his home—for that home held one in whom his affections were entirely absorbed—the young, the artless, the beautiful Rosabella.

How shall we describe the village beauty? Fancy a fair girl of eighteen, with ripening charms enhanced by health and innocence. To "lips of coral, eyes of blue," add nut-brown hair in rich profusion—while cheeks, tinted with nature's carmine, would crimson to the brow at "man's approval." Unite to these a figure full, but exquisitely rounded, and a voice, that "excellent thing in woman," so sweetly modulated, that every tone went to the heart, and its every accent, "the listener held his breath to hear." Such was the flower that blushed unseen in the seclusion of Willesdean—such the old man's daughter, under whose roof-tree Talbot and his subaltern were sheltered.

Never was a more dangerous inmate introduced to the abode of one, young, warm-hearted, and unsophisticated, like Rosa Barlow. Never was more trying temptation imposed upon a man just entering on the path of life, with all the

ardour of youth, untempered with the prudence which sobered manhood generally brings with it. Rosa fancied no injury, and feared none; Egerton had to guard against the latitude of principle not discouraged in the upper castes, while the *prestige* of early success was to be carefully resisted. To do him justice, he devised no mischief against the gentle and unsuspecting girl; but the ordeal that waited both was more than hazardous.

A month passed—and in another the light company of the —th quartered at Willisdean would be relieved. To guard against the demoralising consequences attendant upon still-hunting, under which even the steadiest of the soldiers fell; the best remedy was considered at head quarters to lie in an abridgment of the term of the temptation—and to effect it, the replacement of the detachments with fresh reliefs, as quickly as regimental convenience would allow it, was resorted to. What had that one brief month produced? In Egerton, a passion, such as may be fancied at twenty-two—in Rosa, the deep, ardent, soul-felt, all-engrossing feelings, known only once in woman's life; created, existing, and extinguished with first love—first love alone. Unhappily, the avocation of a country practitioner called Doctor Barlow frequently from home. He was a botanist—and when his medical duties were discharged would waste hours among the mountains searching after useless plants, when,

“The fairest flower

That ever bloomed in any bower,”

was left unguarded. Did love ever forego his opportunity?

It was nearly dusk—the Doctor had returned wet and weary from a distant visit, and his daughter was sedulously engaged in attending to her father's comfort; for never did an orphaned child bestow upon a parent more devoted love. Captain Talbot and his young companion were seated *tête-à-tête* beside a cheerful turf fire, which, on a wet evening, even in the merry month of June, is not objectionable in the Kingdom of Connaught. The Captain had disposed of four tumblers of mountain dew, correctly fabricated—and having made a fifth investment of the *poteine*, he knocked the ashes from his meerschaum, and proceeded to recharge it from a huge bag of nigger-head deposited at his elbow. He gave a couple of preliminary puffs, and then addressed his young companion.

“Frank, you will take in good part what I am about to say. You know that I have a regard for ye—and faith, I would go farther to serve you than even my eldest brother—bad luck attend him! to let the majority go over my head—the sneaking hound! when he should have come down with the money. I tell ye what, I don't like matters as they are going on at present.”

Those who are acquainted intimately with national character may remember that when an Irish gentleman becomes excited, whether his mood be grave or merry, the reckless indifference with which he pours out his anger or his badinage, is conveyed in expressive language, unequivocally marking, by intonation, breath, and originality, his feelings without concealment—and his country without mistake. Of this order was Captain Talbot—a very candid censor and adviser—and, of course, at times, a devilish disagreeable one.

Egerton felt a private foreboding of what the captain was driving at, but affected a look of indifference, and carelessly inquired, “what were the matters he alluded to?”

Nature had not designed Captain Talbot for a casuist. He was a man who jumped to a conclusion in a second, and plunged in *medias res*, before another would have had time to bless himself.

“What matters do I allude to?” he inquired, in plain English. “Do you intend to marry, or only amuse yourself with the old man's daughter?”

“Marry, Talbot!—are you mad?”

“Sane as the Lord Chancellor,” was the reply. “There are but two characters your conduct towards young Rosa can entitle you to claim—a husband's or a scoundrel's”—and the captain, after an enormous inhalation of his favourite weed, emitted it again with great deliberation—a long interval occurring between every puff.

Egerton coloured to the eyes.

"I cannot suppose, Talbot, that you mean the gross and unprovoked insult that your words convey; or—"

"Arrah, never mind that on," said the captain, with perfect coolness. "It's a nasty word, and one that has brought many a private gentleman into trouble. Now, I can fancy you ready to fly into a passion, because I told you a bit of the truth. Wouldn't that be silly, Frank? Here I am—any one can reason with me; and, as the song goes, I'll continue 'mild as a dove.'"

Piqued and irritated as Egerton felt at the home thrust the captain had delivered, he could not refrain from smiling at Talbot's modest description of his own placidity of temper.

"A beautiful specimen of the dove tribe!" he said, looking his companion full in the face. "Now, I ask you, on corporal oath, did your grandfather insinuate broadly that you were a scoundrel, would you not shoot him for the same?"

"I won't swear that I would not," returned the captain, laughing. "The best intentions, you know, may fail; but faith, I would do my best to drill the ould gentleman for his incivility. But, bear with me, Frank; you know that what I would say to yourself and privately, no man, were your back turned, dare utter in my presence, if for the integrity of his carcase he had the slightest care. I speak to you now as I would speak to a younger brother. What are your intentions regarding that sweet and gentle girl, over whose affections—and, I fear, unfortunately for both—you have gained an absolute ascendancy?"

"Nonsense, Talbot; you have got some crotchet in your head." And Egerton coloured.

"No crotchet, Frank; I wish to God it were. You have gained poor Rosa's heart—what, let me repeat, are your intentions?"

Pat Talbot was a querist not to be goaded; and the young soldier, in homely parlance, was driven into a corner, and must necessarily show fight.

"Can a slight flirtation not be indulged in, Pat, but the parish clerk must be consulted instant, and the parson called upon to publish the banns? You are a stout advocate for matrimony. Why not set the regiment a good example, and make Rosa—Mrs. Talbot?"

The captain took the meerschaum quietly from his mouth, deposited it on the table, stirred his tumbler with great deliberation, raised it to his lips, discussed a moiety of the contents, and then, with perfect coolness, responded to the young lieutenant:—

"I will answer your question first, and give you my private opinions afterwards. I am—should I live until next Lady-day—forty-eight; and Rosa, as she tells me, bordering upon eighteen. Have you noticed anything lately in my conduct that bespeaks approaching dotage? Why, then, propose an act of idiocy? Love does not consort with wrinkles: and as I never could conveniently visit Master Hymen in the morning of my life, I won't trouble him with a call in the afternoon. To be serious, Frank—I fear that you are not in a position to marry, and I estimate you too highly to suspect for one moment that you dream aught that could compromise Rosa's honour. But have you any right to play with her affections—any excuse to tamper with her heart? I love you as a brother; and, by every better feeling of a gentleman, I warn you against impending danger, and call on you to desist before it be too late!"

Egerton, in his soul, felt the truthful appeal which the captain had made to his better feelings; and, unable to gainsay it, he looked sorrowfully into the fire, and remained silent.

"Frank, can you marry? and if you *could*, will you make Rosa a wife?"

Egerton's first feeling was offended pride—and the look he directed at the commander was pugnacious. The cool, unmoved, immovable bearing of his rough but faithful monitor, showed that he, honest man, was impassive to all consequences—while conscience, which makes cowards of us all, utterly changed

his own mood, and after a moment's indecision, he admitted that a matrimonial engagement would, at the present, be impracticable—ruinous in the future.

The captain rose—popped his hand across the table, and shook that of Egerton most heartily. "That's right, Frank—always be above board, and now my mind is easy. Never shy a fact; for what the devil is the use of men beating about the bush, instead of bolting the truth at once. When I shot Denis O'Dowd through both thighs, and found next morning that it was his cousin, and not himself, who had said that a respectable tailor would not be seen in my company at a bull-bait—didn't I go to his bed-side, and give him an ample apology? Well, now that you have made a free confession, I can advise you how to act—you must be off to head-quarters—and absence may remedy matters, which intimacy, were it continued, would confirm. I'll manage all. But, hark!—some one knocks. 'Tis the guager. The party is in readiness—go, Frank—and think coolly over what I have been preaching, till my tumbler's not worth drinking, it's so cold."

Talbot's character was a singular composition. It was alloyed by some moral infinities, and it had more good ones to redeem them. His failings were rather educational than natural—he was a duellist by precept and practice; but every hour the kindest sympathies towards his fellow men broke out. The man whom he shot at yesterday, could a pilgrimage benefit him, Pat Talbot would undertake it on the morrow. His chief peculiarities consisted in an utter disbelief that death by a duelling pistol could approximate, in the most remote degree, to murder; the second, and a very common error with his countrymen, was the rapidity with which, at first sight, he formed a friendship, or took a dislike. With this man, and after but an hour's acquaintance, he would share his last shilling—and to that, and without any cause, he, to use his own phraseology "presented his aversion during life." Egerton he had fancied from the first, and subsequent intimacy confirmed an early predilection. Rosa, from the moment he saw her, became an object of his warmest regard. He loved her with perfect singleness of heart, and would have traversed the world to render her a service. He had a friendship, and a most sincere one, for his young lieutenant; but had Egerton devised, or attempted aught against the purity of the unsuspecting fair one whose happiness Captain Talbot had been pleased to take under his especial care, in a gentlemanlike manner he would have qualified his friend for a *post mortem* examination; and that with as slight compunction as he would feel in shooting a woodcock.

The party was told off under the gallant captain's supervision—and, with trailed arms, they departed from their quarters with their officer and the excise-man to execute the midnight foray. Talbot poked the fire, flung on more peats, fabricated a fresh tumbler, and proceeded, as was his custom, to "think aloud."

"I have done right," he said, recharging his meerschaum with nigger-head; "I will write, 'private and confidential,' to Colonel Crossbelt, and, as Holman has returned, get him sent out to relieve Egerton at once. Poor fellow, how quietly he took my lecture! Heigh-ho! Well, I'll sleep the sounder, for my conscience tells me I am right."

"Talbot speaks truly. Would to Heaven, Rosa, I were thirty for thy sake," thought the young lieutenant, as he marched down the street, "and wrong-headed as he may be in other matters, in this case his judgment is correct. I cannot, will not marry—and, but as a wife, could I dream, between myself and Rosa, of any alternative but an eternal separation. Rosa, I will tear myself away; my heart may wring, but my honour shall pass the ordeal untarnished. I cannot wed thee, Rosa,—and he who would mean thee worse,—may curses light upon him! He would be indeed a villain."

THE ECLIPSE OF THE MOON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF JEAN PAUL.

BY JOHN OXENFORD.

On the lily fields of the moon dwells the mother of mankind, with all her countless daughters, in quiet eternal love. The celestial blue which flutters high over the earth is there sunken into a snow composed of flower-dust—no hatred gnaws the gentle souls; but as the rainbows of a waterfall are intertwined, so do love and repose combine all their embraces into one; and even in her silent night the earth hangs, spread out, and, glittering beneath the stars, the souls who have known human joy and sorrow upon it look with sweet longing and remembrance upon that island which they have left, and upon which beloved ones are still dwelling, and resting their outstretched limbs; and when the earth, heavy with slumber, approaches the closing eyes with dazzling nearness, the former springs of the earth sail by in glittering dreams; and when the eye awakens it hangs full of the morning dew of joyful tears.

But when the dial of eternity points to a new century, then does a lightning flash of hot pain dart through the heart of the mother of men; then do the beloved daughters, who have not been on the earth, proceed from the moon into their bodies, as soon as the earth has touched and benumbed them with its cold shadow, and the mother of mankind weeps as she sees them depart, because not all of them, but only the unsullied ones, return back to her from earth into the pure moon. Thus one century after another takes the children from the impoverished mother, and she trembles when, on the appointed day, she sees our despoiling sphere close to the sun, like a broad firm cloud.

The hand of eternity was approaching the 18th century—and the earth, full of night, moved towards the sun—the mother, burning and oppressed with anguish, clasped to her heart all those of her daughters who had not yet worn the veil of a body, and, weeping, implored them—"Oh! fall not, you dear ones; but remain pure as angels, and return again." The giant shadow nearly touched the century, and the dark earth stood over the entire sun;—a thunder-clap struck the hour;—a comet-sword, through which light was gleaming, hung down from the dark sky—the milky way was shaken, and a voice from it cried—"Appear, thou tempter of mankind."

The Infinite One sends to every century an evil genius to tempt it. Far from the little eye the plan of the Infinite One, studded with stars, and encompassing eternities, stands in the sky as an *insoluble nebulous spot*.*

When the tempter was called, the mother, with all her children, trembled, and the soft souls wept—even those glorified ones who had been here below. Now a giant serpent raised its monstrous form upon the earth, together with the earth-shadow, and, stretching to the moon, said, "I will seduce you." This was the evil spirit of the 18th century. The lily hills of the moon bowed and drooped; the comet-sword waved about like a sword of justice, which shows that it will execute; the serpent with sportive, soul-murdering eyes, with a blood-red crest, with lips licked and bitten through, and with tongue darted out, insinuated itself into the soft Eden; its tail trembled hungrily and maliciously in a grave of earth; and an earthquake upon our sphere made the twining folds and the various poisonous juices move like a liquid glittering storm. Oh, it was the black genius, who long ago seduced our wretched mother. She could not look upon him, but the serpent began:—"Knowest thou not the serpent, Eve? I will seduce thy daughters, and gather them together in the marsh. Look,

* An insoluble nebulous spot (unauföslicker Nebelfleck) is a starry heaven thrown back to an infinite distance, in which the individual suns cannot be seen by any telescope.—Jean Paul's note.

sisters, these are the baits with which I lure you all." (Then the viper-eyes imitated the forms of men—the mottled rings looked like bridal rings, and the yellow scales like pieces of money.) "Therefore do I deprive you of the moon and of virtue. In the snares of silken ribbons and the net of costly stuffs I will catch you; with my red crown I will lure you, and you will desire to wear it; within your hearts I will begin to speak and to praise you, and then I will creep into a man's throat, and give confirmation to my words. To your tongues I will give the sharpness and venom of my own. It will not be till all goes wrong with you, or shortly before your deaths, that I shall give your hearts the sharp, hot, and useless bite of conscience. Take an eternal farewell, Eve. What I have told them they will fortunately forget before they are born."

The unborn souls shrunk together trembling before this cold exhaling upstee now so near them, and the other souls, which, pure as the fragrance of flowers, had reascended from the earth, embraced each other, weeping with timid joy, and sweetly trembling at a past which they had undergone triumphantly. Maria, the dearest of all the daughters, and the mother of all mankind, clasped each other heart to heart, and kneeling down in the midst of their embraces, raised their supplicating eyes, and the tears that flowed from them, praying thus: "Oh, thou All-loving One, take charge of them!"

And behold, when the monster shot over the moon its long thin tongue, cleft like the claw of a lobster, and snapped the lilies in twain, saying, when it had made a black speck in the moon: "I will seduce them,"—behold there arose the first sunbeam behind the earth, scattering light in its course, and the golden radiance illumined the forehead of a tall fair youth, who unobservedly had stepped into the midst of the trembling souls. A lily covered his heart, a laurel wreath full of rosebuds was green upon his forehead, and his raiment was blue as the sky. Mildly weeping and beaming with the warmth of love, he looked down upon the mournful souls, as the sun upon a rainbow—and said, "I will protect you!" It was the genius of religion. The rolling giant-serpent seemed congealed before him, and stood petrified upon the earth and against the moon—a powder magazine filled with black silent death.

And the sun flung a greater morning upon the youth's face; and raising his eye, which opened wide to the stars, he said to the Infinite One—"Father, I am going down into life with my sisters, and will protect all that will endure me. Crown the ethereal flame with a beautiful temple! they shall not disfigure and destroy it. Adorn the fair soul with a bower formed of earthly charms; this will only protect, not darken the fruit. Give it a beautiful eye—I will move it and bedew it; place a soft heart in the bosom—it shall not fall asunder before it has beaten for thee and for virtue. Unspotted and unbroken I will bring back from earth the flower converted to a fruit; for I will fly up to the mountains, and the sun, and below the stars, and will remind it of thee and of the world above the earth. I will change the lily in my bosom into the white light of this morn, and the rosebuds in my wreath to the red of a spring evening, and thus remind it of its brother. In the tones of music I will call upon it, and will discourse with it of thy heaven, and open that heaven to the harmonised heart. With the arms of its parents I will clasp it to myself—with the voice of poetry I will conceal my own, and beautify my own form with that of the beloved one. Yea, with the storm of sorrows I will pass over it, and cast the glittering rain into its eyes, and direct the eyes to those elevated regions and the kindred from which it has descended. Oh! ye beloved ones, who do not repel your brethren—when, after a noble deed, after a hard victory, a sweet longing is diffused over your heart, when in the starry night, and the red glow of evening, your eye fades with inexpressible pleasure and your whole being raises itself, and presses upwards, and loving, and calm, and uneasy, and weeping, and languishing, stretches out its arms,—then I am in your hearts, and give you a sign that I am embracing you, and that you are my sisters. And then, after a short dream, and sleep, I will break the rind from the diamond, and let the gem fall back as light dew into the lilies of the morn. Oh! tender mother of mankind,

look not with such pain upon thy beloved children, but take a joyful leave of them—thou wilt lose but few.”

The sun glowed uncovered before the morn, and the unborn souls proceeded to the earth, and the Genius of Virtue went with them; and as they flew towards the earth the sound of a melodious flute echoed through the blue, as when swans fly on a winter's night, and leave tones instead of waves in the breeze.

The giant serpent, in the broad curve of a glowing, flying bombshell, and finally bent into a torch of burning pitch, sank back to earth; and as a water-spout bursts to atoms over a ship, so did the serpent fall upon the earth; and shrivelled into a thousand ties and knots, wound itself—slaying and despoiling—among all the nations of the world. And the sword of justice again trembled, but the echo of the ether, through which the passage had been made, lasted longer.

MEMOIR OF A MODERN CRIMINAL.

“One man may steal a sheep with impunity, while another is hanged merely for looking over the wall.”—*Old Proverb.*

I HAVE read casually in a modern novel or antiquated magazine, a lacrymatory notice of some interesting youth, who shuffled off this mortal coil at Tyburn tree, who *exited* with a nosegay in his hand; and, like Larrey O'Brien, of Irish song,

“Tho’ he kick’d, it was all out of pride,
And he died with his face to the city;”

and yet, notwithstanding his elegant and spirited departure, I could not squeeze out a tear. I belong to an obsolete school—hold drivelling philanthropists to be fools—fancy that a murderer should be hanged, and a pickpocket accommodated on the treadmill—in short, to felony I cannot extend the slightest sympathy. I disown all fellowship with a cut-throat—and repudiate a gentleman who frees himself “*e vinculo matrimonii*” with a phial or the knife, as emphatically as the “Little Dustpan” in Holborn declares against all connection with the larger utensil at the other side of the street.

Not many years ago the penal code of Britain was so sanguinary—the severity of punishment so far exceeding the extent of the offence—that criminals generally obtained commiseration—society became surfeited with daily exhibitions on the gallows—the call of humanity became every day louder, and was at last listened to—and the criminal laws were most properly relaxed. Two or three crimes only were considered as meriting death; and although the infliction of the extreme penalty of the law, under any plea whatever, is still a *questio vexata* with the public, one fact must unfortunately be admitted—that while under a milder administration of justice offences against property have decreased, those against the person have undergone no abatement—while the gallows, like good fortune, has not always been attained of late by those who best deserved it.

When one obtains a ferocious romance from a country library, where daggers and drugs are employed in every page, the horror intended to be produced gives place to a smile of incredulity. But without going back to the days of

Sandy Bean, and the cannibals who composed his infernal family, let any man who has lived but a quarter of a century tax his memory, and he will recal deeds of modern date which double distance the wildest picture of crime that ever a crazy novelist put through the Minerva Press. The wholesale slaughter-houses of the burkers—the pork-chop supper at Probert's, when Weare was thrown into the horse-pond—the Greenacre cutting up—the Red Barn tragedy,—what romance-writer would dare to embody such frightful enormities?—and yet, in the scale of crime, all these are surpassed by murders recently committed by a hanged and an un-hanged criminal. In the one case I allude to the arch-hypocrite Tawell—and in the other, to that villain who for the present has evaded the rope, and whose dismantled dwelling I looked upon with unfeigned pleasure while wandering recently on the Borders.

to another edit the name—
total absent good but "The proper study of mankind is man," *to other edit and bold*
regard

and to him who would look earnestly into the secret springs of human passion, a sketch of this monster—for it would be dangerous to apply the term *murderer* to a gentleman whom a dozen cockneys had pronounced to be, like Brutus, "an honourable man"—will be found both curious and interesting.

B— was a low-born fellow, whose father, till lately, followed the humble calling of a carrier. His want of early education can be best estimated by a perusal of a singular letter, which will be presently transcribed verbatim. His personal appearance was plain—and to use a modern but expressive phrase, his "style of man" decidedly vulgar. In address he had no ease, but great assurance—and his manners were smooth and sneaking. Nature, in personal and mental qualities, had marked him for an humble walk of life—and yet plain, low-born, vulgar and illiterate, the scoundrel's all-engrossing passion was a vaulting ambition, to which no limit could be assigned—ay, and to an extent which, were it not established beyond the reach of question, could not be credited.

The first half-dozen years of his manhood are wrapped in obscurity. They were chiefly spent in the Scottish capital: some say in a menial situation, and others as a common policeman. In whatever position, however, he was placed, B— attended public lectures—and so far improved a neglected education, that by dint of impudence and a forged diploma, his next appearance on the stage of life was in the character of a surgeon.

The assumption of this title was the first rung in the ladder of ambition—but B—'s "*itur ad astra*" he decided should lead through matrimony. After a towering flight, which exceeded the utmost extent that human audacity could reach, he struck at lowlier game—and unfortunately succeeded in obtaining possession of a school-girl, the victim whom he sacrificed. She was rather pretty, and an only daughter—and, failing her mother, was entitled to property amounting to probably some seven thousand pounds.

The possession of her fortune was B—'s only object—and that was merely intended to be the means of working out ulterior plans. "I believe," said the gentleman who allowed me to transcribe B—'s letters, "that the death of the wretched girl had been devised and arranged even before the monster led her to the altar." A great obstacle was in the road. He could not obtain his wife's property while her mother lived, and the old woman must be removed. Surgeon (?) B— was of course domestic physician, and prescribed for the patient. She was in good health at eight o'clock, dead at twelve, and buried before the sun dipped in ocean the next evening.

So far "the work went bravely on." The mother was removed, and the daughter now must follow. Although the villain played a well-managed and clever game, still his murderous disposition, tiger-like, broke out occasionally, and marred the course of action he had chalked. A part of his game was to ape humanity. Well, there was a favourite canary to which his wife was attached—he poisoned it; there was an old, faithful mastiff, who by singular instinct avoided his new master—he shot him deliberately because he would not

fawn upon him. There was a milch cow his wife had reared and loved; he handed her over to the butcher. Still, though his infernal disposition rose above control, he played the game he had preconcerted most assiduously. In public he affected even a lover's fondness for his devoted victim; and in the village inn was so disgustingly affectionate, as to fondle her—poor wretch!—upon his knee, and kiss her in the presence of the company, while on that same wintry night, and when all, as he supposed, were sleeping, he turned her out of doors, with no garments to defend her from the cold, except the dress she slept in!

The time for the grand *coup d'état*, he considered, had now arrived. The mother was in her grave, and the poor deluded girl had made a will, and bequeathed the property strictly settled on herself, to the monster she called husband. An occurrence common to married life, and which has been often known to cement unions which had hitherto been unsettled, appeared on the contrary to hurry him to an immediate commission of his fell purpose. Mrs. B—— was *enclave*, and in 'he villain's eyes the destruction of wife and child were equally important. He selected London—and most judicious was the choice!—as the best and safest scene to carry out his murderous purposes—brought the victim to the capital—and the mode in which he murdered her is still too fresh in public recollection to require detail.

He was suspected, arraigned, and tried—and, in the teeth of the strongest circumstantial evidence that ever was produced to establish the guilt of a murderer, he was acquitted; although he had not, as Tawell had, a Q.C. to weep over him, albeit his tears did not melt that honest jury. In the metropolis the villain's evasion of the rope elicited a burst of general indignation—and from the west-end club-house to the eastern free-and-easy, nothing was spoken of but the acquittal of B——. The charge of the learned judge, and the verdict returned by the jury were freely and severely canvassed. The former was irreverently designated "an old woman"—and it was piously entreated that the next persons whom B—— should select to experimentalise upon with prussic acid, should be his own jury, the foreman having precedence. What could have led twelve sane men to return a verdict of "not guilty" was the puzzle. That he had deliberately murdered the poor girl was established by sufficient evidence to hang a dozen; and the only conclusion that men could come to was, that the jury were disciples of the Newcastle school—the victim was his wife—and *ergo*, he had a right to do what he pleased with his own. Still the conduct of the judge and jury were freely canvassed, and reprobated in unmeasured terms even by those known as most averse to capital punishment.

I am a citizen of the world, and mix in all its bee-hives; and I am free to de-

* The murder of poor Lion, as narrated to me by the old man in his Northumbrian *patois*, was not listened to without emotion.

"Strange, sir, that the beast will not tak till ye," I said, as the maister tried to coax him—"Why he's the kindest brute in the world. He'll play a' the day wi' the callants, —and ooh! how he jumps when he hears the mistress' foot."

B——'s brows contracted, and without making a reply, he went into the house, and soon after returned with a pistol.

"Lion!" he said, in what he meant should be a conciliatory tone, but the honest mastiff repudiated this attempt at intimacy, retired to his sentry-box, and resting his head between his paws, looked his murderer steadily in the face.

"Ye'll nae harm the puir beast?" I said.

"I'll serve him as I would anything that crossed me," returned B——, and laying the muzzle of the pistol on the dog's forehead, he blew his skull to pieces.

"Fling the d—d brute over the cliff!" said the scoundrel, as he eyed the bleeding carcass with a grin—and then returned to the house.

"Lion!" said I, as he closed the door, "scart and kittiewake (*seabirds*) shall never pick your een out!" sae I dragged him outside the wa', and dug a bit grave for him on that know, where the grass looks greener than the sward around it. Mony a simmer evenin, when work is done, I sit down upon the puir brute's grave, and fancy I am talkin to auld Lion."

clare that during my perambulations from St. James's-square to St. Katherine's-docks, I never heard a single person originate a present of plate either to the learned baron or the conscientious jury who loosed B—— on the world.

Would it be credited—but ere this memoir is concluded the reader would believe anything touching this felon's audacity—that B—— after he was launched again upon society, had the *hardiness* to return to the North? When he arrived within twenty miles of the house where he had operated upon the old woman, every village which he passed through received him with execrations—but the outburst of popular fury was reserved for North Sunderland. The evening of his arrival the townspeople welcomed him home, by hanging an effigy before his windows, with an excellent likeness of the delinquent cut out of a huge turnip. That, however, was but a simple note of preparation—and, notwithstanding the decision of the learned Thebans of the Old Bailey, the Northumbrian fishermen condemned the murderer to death—and on the next evening proceeded to carry the sentence into execution.

To the cry of wisdom in the street—namely, the approach of a tumultuary mass of people, B—— did not sport deaf adder, but absconded by a back door, and fled the country. Disappointed in the anticipated hanging-match, the mob burst the house open, demolished the furniture, and wrecked their final vengeance on the fugitive's effects, by burning what they had not broken.

B—— certainly got seven thousand pounds' worth of property by the unfortunate girl whom he destroyed. But wealth did not produce the end expected, and his efforts to worm himself into society were vain—for not a decent man would contaminate his shoe by placing it, as they say in Ireland, "under his mahogany." His burning anxiety was to bring himself into notice; and he thought, through the neglected art of falconry, he might possibly obtain an *entré* to the houses of gentlemen attached to field-sports. That effort also proved an expensive and complete failure; for all, like the poor old mastiff which he shot, appeared to intuitively recoil from his advances. A lady assured me, when he brought his hawks to the Highland cattle-show at Berwick, and her husband having, with the well-known hospitality of that ancient town, invited him as a stranger to dinner, that during the time while she remained in the eating-room she could not bear to meet his eye, and recoiled, she knew not wherefore, even from the sound of his voice.

Now comes the most remarkable part of "this strange, eventful history." B——, in a journey to Edinburgh some time previous to his marriage—or rather, as it would be wrong to desecrate that honourable estate by applying the term to the holy imposition by which he ensnared his victim and obtained Miss S——'s fortune—had travelled a few stages with an elderly gentleman and his daughter. The father was easy in his manners, and condescending, as gentlemen always are to those beneath them: the young lady, as the well-born and the well-bred will do, acknowledged the accidental equality of a stage-coach, and replied to B——'s remarks with courtesy. The rest the annexed epistle will best detail; and nothing could develop the man's character half so powerfully as the letter he addressed to Mr. ——, a gentleman on whom he had for a time inflicted his acquaintance. Who, friend or enemy, would not now write a book? The fellow who penned this epistle had then actually published a volume upon Falconry! Is not that encouragement for authors who, like Lord Loggerhead, are a little loose in their orthography?

"N. Sunderland, Dec. 22nd, 1837.

"My dear Sir,—I had resolved never to write to you again for your not having answered my last letter or letters, but as that alone (though *proking* enough) is not a very manly reason for parting with a friend, and having seen you at the coach-office, where I promised to write, I have now broken my resolution, and taken up my pen to *fulfile* my promise, having very few friends, and being always slow in forming them (so much so, that I have never made one new one since I came to Sunderland). I am also unwilling to let go without a good reason the end of that cable on which anchors an old one; concerning that your friends and acquaintances, nearer you, with whom you are

better acquainted: had a better to, and so monopolized to themselves your friendship, that those more remote should have nothing more than a silence as a tacit hint to yield up their claim to it, by which I had almost forgiven, but not forgotten you, giving rather repugnance to the friendship and correspondence of many, and some of these, near enough related to me; I have always considered myself as not of that number of tender Christians who are disposed to court the friendship of their fellow creatures, the pleasures arising from friendships are by no means a compensation for the pain I should feel in obtaining it; indeed, I think *love* that uncontrollable passion, with all its concomitant emotions, and endearing and charming associations, is unable to incite my lips or pen to court for its own gratification. But what!! is my pen really belying my heart—you are astonished—so you may, my good sir, for having stumbled over love at the time I least thought of it, I fear I have imbibed some of its contagious effluvia. But as I had not finished with friendship before I came upon love, I must *rever* to do it. Before I quitted it, I meant to add that I had conceived you possessed of those ingredients of human nature, which constitute unadulterated and disinterested friendship; consequently, I felt sorry at losing sight of them, and now again, having caught hold of them, I mean to take possession, and the use of them so far.

“Now do not be astonished, my dear sir, at my talking of love, for you know, ever since the days of Ovid, and long before him, love has always been known to deal, more or less, in extremes and extravagances. But lest I pinch myself of paper, I with this stuff; I shall go direct to my purpose. I am not in love; no: nor do I believe love to be supreme, but a *subordinat* ruler of my heart; therefore, a love like mine, you will perceive, is a very convenient one, only operating at its own convenience.

“Having considered you as possessed of the ingredients of friendship; I also considered you possessed the tender impressions and sensibilities of love to your loving wife, and to your affectionate children. Believing you then to have qualities, of a good husband, a tender parent, a sincere friend, I wish to find in you another quality, the use of which I would to take—and that is a *good confidant*, which I doubt not will develop itself amongst the other to your honour and satisfaction; it is a confidant, or if you like a bit of a *black-foot* in an affair where my honour, perhaps as much as my love, induces me here to seek your agency. As a woman's heart or reputation is more easily hurt than a man, on this occasion I hope you will render the trust the more sacred. On my way through from ——— to Edinburgh, I had the felicity to travel that far inside the coach with a young lady and her father from your neighbourhood; in whose company, towards the latter part of our journey, a general pleasure seemed to pervade the whole of us, but I do not think love found a place at all. But as you must know the circumstances to treat the case well, trusting to your honour, I give you them as they occurred. On alighting at an inn by the way, to change horses, give the driver a glass, &c., my fellow passengers and I had tea together; during the discussion of which, I paid that attention which civility entitled her to, but nothing more, and she made herself very agreeable, as did her father. Having resumed our seats again in the coach, we three entered *cordiall* into conversation; the lady, especially, seemed free and divested of that effectation and coquetry which is now so fashionable with lady's, but by no means was she too much so. Her father having fallen asleep in the corner, she and I had a good chat alone; however, the old gentleman awoke before we reached Edinburgh, and having observed me say that I only meant to stay in town for a few days, he said it would give him pleasure to have a little of my company during that time. I replied I had little time to spare, but if I could, I would do myself the pleasure of calling upon him; having then no intention of accepting their kind invitation, I paid no regard to their address, for which neglect, after knowing who they were, I have been a little sorry. My reason for declining further acquaintance with them, or any of the genteel order in the neighbourhood, is that it gives me pain instead of pleasure, owing to family circumstances of which you have a good guess; I dare say you are disposed to rebuke me for being so scrupulous, which I cannot easily get over; however, my good fellow, I mean to make amends for my fault by writing the lady if I can. But who were they, think you? who but your almost neighbour ——— and his daughter, of ———. Now I entertain no vain or flattering ideas of them or the result, but I think (since the coachman told me who they were, as I came south again), and as I think they both, particularly the lady, expected the merits of their invitation to be more warmly considered, I cannot do less than give the fair a gentle letter; you perhaps laugh at this as aspiring to much, but my regard for her tender feelings, and my own honour, prompts me thus; and I assure you, if that is anything to be vain of, I might be almost daily in the society of people of as good property and independance as I chose. Now, my good fellow, for your part of the play, I hope you will make up for my bad acting, for which I promise

you a good bumper or two, when we meet to talk about it. What I wish you to do, man, is to take a walk to ——— as soon as possible, and in the most knowing, mysterious, and round-about way, fish out the lady's first name and address, if she has not returned home, and convey them to me with the first post, for I think the fair deserves a letter; the result of which you shall know, it was about the fourth or fifth of this month when she left home; if there is a lodge or inn near the Hall, you should pass in to rest yourself, or get a glass or two (whether you fail or succeed, I shall not grudge you your hire and expenses), and begin your inquiry about the family, &c. But as you are an old practitioner in courting, I need hardly attempt to dictate to you, lay your genius only on, and I fear not your success, only do not create suspicion if possible. Do you know what family they are of them? “Ever yours sincerely, “J. E. B——.”

The person to whom this most singular and characteristic epistle was addressed, feeling himself insulted, by B—— supposing that he would lend himself to assist a sordid scoundrel, who avowed that he had not feelings in common with his fellow-men, not only declined the responsible agency, but left the letter unanswered for six weeks. When he did give the aspiring youth—who seemed determined to leap into an estate from his father's fish-cart at a bound—a tardy and curt reply, it elicited the annexed epistle.

“N. Sunderland, Feb. 12th, 1838.

“Dear Sir,—I received your epistle the other day, for which I am obliged to you. Six weeks or upwards was a long time to take to answer my letter, notwithstanding the nature of its contents; but as the request I made of you was almost as absurd, although such among students and other young wasters, are very common. As the rest and whole of the affair appeared to me on a more mature consideration, that is, after learning more of the individual alluded to's station of rank, &c., your answer, like the fair's self, became matter of mere indifference to me. You said in your letter that you did not mention to H—— of my amore. Did I not think it impossible for your trust and honour to mention it to him or any one else, I would never have intrusted you with the secret.

“Now havin got thro' with the scolding part, I must express my gladness at hearing that you and your family are all well. I wish I could say the same of myself; and instead of matrimony I must think of something else; but if I am no worse, I mean to be in Berwick in the course of a fortnight or so, when I hope to see you. Meantime having no news worth while, I am sincerely yours, “J. E. B——.”

Who was the unknown lady that this insolent scoundrel presumed to aspire to? He, sprung from the dregs of the people—who, while this scene was passing in the coach had probably passed his father and his fish-cart upon the road, or his brother, labouring in his humble vocation of a common carrier to Edinburgh—he, a vulgar ruffian who could not spell, and so unacquainted with the conventional regulations of society as to consider himself privileged to address a letter to a lady, because she had the civility to reply to his observations in a stage-coach. I will not desire the reader not to start, but I shall feel obliged if he will deliver a thundering curse upon the matchless audacity of this wholesale poisoner; and I will further undertake, that neither “the accusing spirit” will turn informer, nor “the recording angel” book the oath against him in Heaven's chancery. The lady was young, beautiful, accomplished, high-born, and wealthy. In her own circle, and of her own caste, more than one suitor had sighed without success; and she had but to smile, and he who had hesitated to tell his love would have been at her feet incontinently. She is now a peeress; and when court beauty is chronicled, among the fairest of the fair you will ever find the name of Lady ——!

If rumour may be trusted, the vengeance of Heaven has begun to show itself—and that wealth, for which B—— murdered a mother, a wife, and two of his own offspring, is melting fast away. It is said that his trial cost him two thousand pounds; and in a castellated abomination, a monument of vulgar folly, which was never completed and is now hurrying to decay, although the mortar is fresh upon the walls, a large sum was ridiculously expended. With that building a circumstance is connected which marks the diabolical disposition of this monster. In a small enclosure of bare grass beside the house—if a one-

storied cabin, with a macciolated parapet, and walls crenellated for musquetry, may be called a house—there is a most dangerous well, forty feet deep, and half filled with water. It is level with the surface of the ground, and you cannot perceive the orifice of this fatal man-trap until you are within a yard or two. The danger of this open well* was pointed out to B——, and the necessity of securing it urged upon him, as the children of the village frequently played beside it after school.

"They are often here," said the old man, "in the gloamin,† and be assured you'll find one or two of the giddy callants in the water some fine morning." I looked," he continued, "askaunt at his countenance, and the smile of the devil was on his face. Weel, when I was quitting work I dragged an old door over and laid it across the well. B—— remained behind, and he closed the gate ahint me. Some misgiving came ower my mind, and I peeped through yon fule thing in the wall," and he pointed out an arrow slit. "There he was at the well, and I saw him pull off the door; and och, maun! I'll ne'er forget the grin was on his mou."

The fate of this atrocious criminal proves that evasion of the rope is but a poor triumph to a murderer. The enormous expenses attendant on his trial—the subornation of witnesses—destruction of one house and abandonment of another—exhausted his means, and B——, as it is believed, left England with only a few hundreds. Legally acquitted by a twaddling judge, and a jury who would not hang a dog in hydrophobia, the terrible tribunal of public opinion pronounced him guilty. He entered a theatre, closely muffled, but was detected and hooted out. He got into a cab—the horse fell before he had driven a dozen yards. An idle Irishman hurried to the rescue. "Peter," observed the Shan-nonite, "do ye know who you're drivin? It's B——,—curse o' God upon him!—an what better could ye expict?" "Oh! thunder and nouns!" responded the charioteer, opening one door to expel him as the wretched criminal jumped out at the other. Where was the wretch to go? To Ireland? No!—even the Tipperary Thugs would not receive him. They, honest men, operated only with lead and iron; and to them the convenient properties of hydroceanic acid were utterly unknown. America, that land of freedom, was decided on—and, *mutato nomine*, under "the stars and stripes," Mr. B—— has there, for the present, found a resting place.

The general belief, however, is, that he no longer "cumbereth the earth;" and a chain of circumstances connected with an unknown traveller, found murdered in the Backwoods, leads to a conviction almost certain, that B—— was the man. May God assoilzie him! for in earthly judgment he was far beyond the pale of pity or of pardon.

* A fearful accident happened at Bamborough but a short time since. A man and woman, passing an open well in the dusk, unfortunately fell in, and were found drowned next morning. Bamborough is but three miles from B——'s Castle, and this sad calamity had just occurred.

† Evening, the dusk.

CAPTAIN SQUASH.

A YANKEE LEGEND.

By PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

I.—COAL BLACK.

HAVE you, reader, ever been to Texas? Undoubtedly you will say no. But I have, as many know for their sins, who have listened on various occasions to my big talk, as the Indians have it, about Peccan Spring, Skull Creek, Dickenson's bayou, Bowie-knife rivulet, and other savage and wild localities, on which I love sometimes to dwell; for then, if ever, when wandering over prairie and morass, I viewed nature unadorned. Not that I prefer trees to *trottoirs*, claims to clanvæ, red Indians to Radicals, wooden shanties to Regent-street and Piccadilly, a Fremont street to the rue de la Paix, but I love variety. Were there a weekly steamer to Texas, going on Saturday, and returning on Monday, I might, even at the risk of the anathemas of the Sabbath alliance, spend my day of rest in those sweet woods where so often I have wandered, alone, and more truly with God than in any temple made with man's hands. Not that I presume to blame or discountenance the Sunday in a Christian land, but once and away, it is not ill to send up one's thoughts to the Almighty at the foot of an ancient sycamore, with no sound but the sighing of the breeze, the heaving hum of silence itself, with no roof but heaven—and no footstool but the earth.

One evening, it was in a warm time in May, I lay at the foot of a favourite tree on the estate of Captain Todd, Dickenson's bayou, Texas, absorbed in two occupations equally luxurious—I was smoking my antiquated corn cob pipe, and building castles in the air, or in Spain, which is the same thing. What my castles were, it boots not to tell, for it is yet undecided whether they were airy nothings or substantial realities—the proof of all puddings is in the eating, and I may define ambitious dreams among the intellectual puddings of this world, very pleasant, but hard of digestion, and causing sometimes bitter consequences. Well, I had smoked out two pipes, the hour was growing late, when I heard a distant footstep treading the dry sticks that strewed the ground, and waking the echoes of the wood with his capacious lungs—his words betrayed at once his sable character:—

“Adam was de fust man,

Eve was de t'oder,

Abel was a wicked man,

'Cause he killed him broder.”

Not having the nigger 'phobia upon me, and having no objection to converse with my kind, even in the dusky skin of an African, I called lustily to the nigger—not in order to put into his imagination some of those monstrous absurdities which a certain gullible M.P., of Rajah notoriety, so loves to retail to gaping and admiring women and boys at Exeter Hall, but to talk with seriously, as I would to any other creature in human shape. No one hates slavery more than I do; but I also hate the thing which is expressed so admirably in French and English by a word of equal length—“*Blague*.” “*Humbug*!” and the proper mode of eradicating it in the United States is, not to bully and abuse the Yankees, not to place a brass wall between us and them, not to refuse their Alabama long stalks, their York river leaf, and first-rate bread and cheese, but to reason with them and set them a good example. Republicans are proverbially proud, and will be stiff-backed to all Billingsgate harangues. It is true a reasoning and convincing speaker is an orator which is a rarity; while an abusive stringer of sentences to a certain set sounds like one. Besides—will reasoning fill my purse?

But I am forgetting my sable and singing friend, who at my voice at once ceased his song, and soon placed his fat, merry, and shining face between me and the light.

"Massa, call me?" said the darkey, who was a tall and middle-aged individual, with a nose like a Jew, and teeth like a grinning elephant.

"Yes; I want to have a talk with you," I replied.

"With me, massa?" said the nigger, doubtfully.

"Certainly; I suppose you have a tongue?"

"Oh! ees, massa; me got a tongue—and a werry long one, de boyssay down da," pointing to Galveston, and laughing with a regular sable "ya! ya!"

"Who do you belong to?"

"Me belong to Kubnal Love, massa; he my boss," he continued.

"Colonel Love is your boss, then you know me?"

"Oh! ees, sa"—and the negro laughed heartily; "me often see you take a walk we Miss 'Licia, my young lady."

And the negro looked uncommon sly, while I looked wooden.

"Ah! but Sambo, you know I've got a wife in the old country, Sambo," pointing across the wide space which separated me from England—ten thousand miles of land and water; "and I can play no truant here."

"Me know dat too, massa," said the negro, laughing, for having received leave he gave way to his whole character, "But den you do like Captain Squash?"

"Like Captain Squash, Sambo; I never heard of the gentleman."

"Well, massa, dat wonerful, too," exclaimed the negro, seating himself on the grass; "he was a great man in dis part ob the world once, but him no here now."

"Sambo," said I, gravely, "you don't understand what you say, when you allude to your young mistress and me. I never saw Miss Alicia but twice, and then not to know the colour of her hair; but this Texas is a very scandalous place. It seems one cannot speak to a lady, but it is said to be a match."

"Golly, dat true!" laughed Sambo; "I only kiss Flora twice, and ebbery body say I was going to be married."

"But about Captain Squash?"

"Dat a awful bad affair," said Sambo, shaking his head.

"And you advise me to imitate him?" said I, in feigned anger.

"No, massa, me only joke; but I tell him whole conclusions ob de tale, and massa see dat it war logical story."

I nodded assent, and I then heard for the first time a tale which I since found to be correct in all its particulars, as related to me by the negro, in the cedar grove of Toddville.*

II.—THE NEGRO'S STORY.

THERE landed one day from the New Orleans steamer, a tall, well-made, and handsome Yankee, upon the steam-boat quay of Galveston, who gave his name plain Captain Squash. He was well dressed—had a large amount of baggage, and seemed in a position, as far as worldly goods were concerned, to brave all the difficulties of a new country. No sooner was he on shore, than placing his things upon a truck which Red-haired Harry, of Mellor's boarding-house, wheeled along the street for him, he took up his residence at the Tremont hotel, a huge wooden building which, with Shaw's, divided the custom of the Sand bank known on the map as Galveston Island. This choice on the part of Captain Squash showed a knowledge of life, for it was the up-hill place of the locality, the first chop and out-and-outer of Texan civilisation, where balls were given at sovereign (British) a head, and men were not obliged in dry weather to put umbrellas over the beds to keep out the rain—where a gong called to supper, and wooden skewers were provided for tooth-picks to save the forks—where

* I have in this narrative done nothing but alter the names. Every Texan will recollect its occurrence in 1840.

black waiters attended in pepper-and-salt instead of red flannel shirts—where, in fact, the height of the fashion took up their quarters, when any of that anomalous and butterfly race found their way into these diggins. It was morning when Captain Squash landed, and before evening he was friendly and familiar with the whole of the *sammies* of the house. Though himself somewhat better bred and educated than the others, Captain Squash evidently knew the world too well not to fall in with men as he found them, and as he smoked much, chewed a little, and swore occasionally, he was pretty well up to the level of Texan society. Before evening he was familiar, and had bought a ball ticket for that very night, at five dollars, on the promise of being introduced to some spanking lasses just arrived from Bremen, and who came out with the laudable intention of providing mates for the disconsolate bachelors forming the vast majority of the population of Texas. Dutch balls, on the whole, at Galveston were suitable to the purlieus of Wapping or the Rue St. Denis; but on this occasion the Holland flowers were of a superior class, brought out under the matronly supervision and care of Mistress Gottingha Vanderspluken, whose spectacles were more all-seeing than the hundred eyes of Argus.

At nine o'clock precisely the ball commenced, and no mean array of names was there. Imagine a flat surface composed of sand, on which have been erected some two or three hundred wooden houses, whitewashed on the outside. Imagine a big wooden house larger than them all, and you have Galveston and its principal hotel. Imagine a long apartment with wooden benches around, and certain scattered chairs, the whole illumined by a tremendous blaze of tallow, and you have the ball-room. Imagine some hundred men, colonels, generals, commodores, doctors, members of Parliament, presidents, lawyers, with the trifling addition of being salesmen, grocers, bakers, butchers, &c., and you have, with, one or two English, French and New York merchants, the male portion of the party, in costume varying from the Bond-street exquisite to the backwood blanket coat; talking, chewing, smoking, spitting, and laughing, and you have them to the life. Imagine some twenty quiet, unassuming, very handsome women, all young and charming, and you have the wives of the married portion of this rough apartment; with about three dozen fresh, rosy-cheeked, and laughing-eyed Bremen girls, you have the whole.

I might no doubt be very learned and very satirical upon the Yankee young ladies and Yankee young gentleman who figured at the Tremont ball, after the fashion of certain critics, who find in poor human nature nothing but food for what our Gallic neighbours call *denigrement*; but, for myself, I take men and women, young and old, like the Italian boy, "as I finds 'em," and look upon them as all God's creatures, made some to shine and some to reflect; some to speak and some to hear; some to be amused with trifles, others to talk seriously: but, upon the whole, in ordinary society I rather prefer the picker up of small change and gossip to the solemn ass who dilates on Shakspeare and the musical glass, the corn-laws and Judaism, and other recondite topics. I love a good, solemn, earnest talker; but I love, too, a party of merry folks, where all are nonsensical, full of fun and joke, and not stuck up to a supper after the manner of the ancients.

Captain Squash, a stranger and a handsome man, was soon provided with a partner. She was one of the Bremen girls, about fifteen; a little, fresh, rosy, simple Dutch tulip, with truth in her eyes, and heart overspreading her every action. The captain was delighted with her; and she, it seemed, was equally so with the captain, though neither could speak the other's natal tongue. Dutch was Hebrew to Squash, English Sanscrit to the lovely Anna. But they met on common ground; she could speak French fluently, he could do so tolerably. Rapid indeed was the progress of love. They danced, flirted, gossipped, and they danced again; they supped, and hob-nobbed over Champagne—or, rather, over American gooseberry-pop; while Squash, true to his land, slyly solaced himself at the bar with a few stray gin-slings, sherry-cobblers, and brandy cocktails. Each hour he grew merrier, until towards morning he so roused himself as to

declare his love, which was, thanks to the great excitement of the occasion, accepted unhesitatingly. I need scarcely add that as nearly a hundred of the men present were bachelors, the whole covey of Gottingha Vanderspluken went off at the same rapid rate.

In Texas it is a civil contract. To unite a couple all that is required is for both to go before the mayor, answer a few questions, sign your name, pay two dollars, and the thing is done—no time for after-thoughts, for reflections. But then divorce is as easy.

At ten o'clock that day, after a breakfast, with which the ball ended, the whole of the couples were married. Merry and gay was the vast wedding party, and none were merrier than Captain Squash. Some noticed, indeed, that the stranger drank deeply, as if to drown care; but most were too much engaged to remark any such peculiarity.

Here ends the whole comedy of the matter.

At the end of a week Captain Squash had invested a large portion of his property in a dry store, which in partnership with one Ezekiel Schlingen he carried on in the market-place. The rest was devoted to purchasing and furnishing a pretty little wooden shanty at the very farthest end of the town. A neat, comfortable, pretty locality it was, but not half enough for the precious treasure it contained—a fond, and gentle wife, casting the whole richness of her orphan heart round him who now was her all in all, meekly watching his every glance, to seek to please him, beforehand with his every wish, ever ready with the smile of welcome and the soft whispered adieu, that spoke of glad longing for his return. Anna mingled with all this a child-like obedience agreeable to her extreme youth, that was of irresistible fascination. If love could repay all this she should have been happy, and she was, for he let her see all the full earnestness of his manly affection. He was tender with her, most tender, not Hamlet's father was gentler with his wife than the American with his. For hours he would sit listening with charmed ear to her almost infantine prattle, and a kiss pressed on her forehead would be ample and full reward.

But he—he was not happy. Away from her he was stern, dry, even fierce; all his humour and merriment were gone. He could leave his business and go wander alone on the sea shore, where the stunning tumult of the tempest would vainly seek to move him. He neither, at these times, heard nor saw, for there was a mightier storm still within his breast. Suddenly he would awake and, smoothing his brow, would stride rapidly across the sandy waste to where his presence was heaven itself—was all full and true joy.

Before the end of the year he was a father. Great was the happiness and delight of the young mother. Her babe, a boy, was a new little world for her—a plaything, a new existence, a double joy. Her delight was at times frantic, as she would toss the screaming child on high and bid it quickly learn to say "papa." The Captain never was more fond, and dearly did he love both the babe and his innocent little wife. But his gloom increased when she was away; his sombre musings preyed upon him, he shrunk, to all eyes but hers, to the skeleton of a man.

Once or twice he visited the post-office, as if by stealth, and several letters came, which he read on the vexed sea-beach, and then, madly tearing, scattered to the winds of the gulph. He wrote by stealth, and stole at night to send away his missive; lurking round the box ere he dared to put his letter in, like a ghost of the damned round the seat of his crime. Doubly black was his melancholy; for many days after there seemed to hang a heavy weight upon his conscience.

Another year passed, and the boy grew apace, and thrived. To the free and wild delight of its child-mother it began to toddle, and Anna often said such joy was too great for earth. And the captain began to look better; there was a less heavy weight upon him; he grew stouter, and his step was lighter. Even his wife began to see that he must, as she thought, have been ill.

For four months he had visited the post-office without any result.

It was in the spring, and the steamer (New York), swept into the harbour: its deck covered with passengers. In another quarter of an hour they were landed, and scattered over the town.

The captain was at his store, his wife was at home.

At the next wharf was the Galveston, with her steam up ready to start within an hour.

Anna was in her little parlour reading. On the step of the doorway played the little prattling creature that called her mother, when the child suddenly shrieked, and next instant a tall and commanding figure stood by the side of the young wife. She raised her eyes. It was a handsome young woman, in deep mourning. In her hand were a brace of pistols.

"Where is John Cartwright?" she said, menacingly.

"Madam," replied the young wife, "I know no such person."

"I forget; his name here is Captain Squash," said the other, bitterly.

"My husband," cried Anna, trembling like a leaf.

"Thou liest, woman!" shrieked the stranger—"mine first. But where is he, the black villain?"

"Oh, madam, do not hurt him," said Anna, falling on her knees, and seizing one hand of the maddened wife.

"Touch me not," cried the creole—for she was French in origin—and, with the word, sent Anna insensible back upon the floor.

"Ah!" she continued, addressing a little negro girl, "is this your master's child?"

The black replied that it was.

The creole smiled—but one of those smiles which speak more hate, revenge, and scorn than million frowns.

"Go! call your master; they tell me at the inn he is at his store," she continued hastily, as she heard the last bell of the steamer.

The girl hurried to obey.

Scarcely was she out of sight when the maddened creole flew at the frightened babe, pressed it with a frantic kiss to her lips, and then, soothing and coaxing it, deliberately wrapped it in a shawl and walked away.

In ten minutes more the captain was tearing down the street towards the hut; as he reached it, he saw the huge steamer leave her moorings and launch out into the stream.

He entered the house, glancing wildly round into every corner.

It was empty, save that his beloved Anna was lying senseless on the ground. To snatch her up, to bathe her aching forehead, was an instantaneous work; and then he thundered, rather than said—

"Mr. Bor!"

"My God!" shrieked Anna, starting to her feet—"the woman—quick, Oh! save my boy!"

At this instant the little black girl entered; she had come by the strand, and had seen the strange woman standing on the steamer's deck, with the babe in her arms.

Both father and mother gazed wildly at each other, and fell into one another's arms. Their reason was giving way. Next instant they were running hand-in-hand down towards the shore, shrieking out the name of their babe.

The steamer was out at sea, and Anna fell like a corpse on the sand. The captain, now sternly calm, took her in his arms and bore her back to his once happy home. He then sent the affectionate little black for a physician, who pronounced the wretched mother suffering from a congestion of the brain. The captain heard this unmoved, but taking a sheet of paper, wrote a long and calm letter, which he sent for transmission to New Orleans by the steamer leaving next day. He then became the poor Bremen girl's nurse, and after six days had a moment's relief on hearing her speak. Pale, weak, and hopeless, the unhappy girl's look was more eloquent than words; there was no atom of reproach, but there gushed forth in myriad covetous glances, a question which he could not answer—

"My child?"

He then spoke. He told her that having in a quarrel wounded a man in New York, he had fled to Texas, leaving a wife in the former place to nurse an old and infirm father, whose only child and relative she was. At his death, which could not be distant, she was to rejoin him. Landing in Texas, he had attended the ball, been fascinated by her youth and innocence, and while under the influence of excitement, fatigue, and drink, had married her. The union once taken place, he had not had the heart to deceive her. But remorse, fear, the remembrance of his other wife, whom he had once loved, and still loved, poisoned all his joy. He adored her too much to let her share the hell within him, renewed every month when he received, and had to write a letter.

"My torture was that of the damned! Innocent child, I loved you and my babe; but I still had earnest affection for my widowed wife. At length she ceased to be distant, and I softened my seared soul with the reflection that Heaven had spared her the discovery of my guilt. But no, my punishment was to be sore—her hate, and your contempt."

"Hush!" said the stricken Anna. "I love you, oh! my husband, I love you. But give me back my babe."

"I will," replied the Captain, sternly; "I will. I was wicked, but she has been most cruel. I have written to bid her stay at New Orleans. Her wrong to you has crushed all my old affection. Be well, Anna, child, and I will go fetch your babe."

"But she will kill it," said Anna, wildly.

"Not so—her fault is her affection for me. It drove her mad."

"But oh, my husband," continued Anna, faintly, "I am dying; I shall never, oh! never, see my babe."

Scarce were the words out of her lips, when a little, tiny, weeping face was pressed to hers, and a woman fell by the bed-side, with a shriek.

It was the wife. Revenge had been the impulse which made her bear the infant away, but pity, and her husband's imperative and coldly-stern letter, brought her back.

"My boy, my child, my babe, my John!" wildly cried the young girl; "oh, husband, kiss your boy."

The Captain stooped, and kissed his child.

Its mother was dead!

An hour that guilty man sat by that bed of death, with his child upon his knee. His wife moved about, chastened at the severity of her husband's punishment, and vowing in her heart to be a mother to the lone infant—lone, indeed, for its real mother was dead—lone, indeed, for she who gave birth to it was with God, waiting his good time to be re-united with her earthly child.

Two days after she was buried, and then—he had not opened his lips to his wife, or acknowledged her existence—he took his infant in his arms, and went down to a small boat which he had fitted up, and prepared to depart up the country. A word from him had made his good-natured partner make every fitting arrangement. The boat contained everything required for an up-country squatter, a tent, food, arms, tools, &c. The boat was provided with a sail, and manned by a negro lad and its master. The poor negro girl was there, and on her knee he placed his boy. He then, still without speaking, pushed off, and began his journey into the wilderness.

In the bow of the boat sat his wife.

For weeks and weeks they journeyed, and at last they pitched their tent, but months passed before John Cartwright spoke to his wife; at length one evening he placed his babe gently on her knee.

"Helen!" he whispered, "I have sinned, but I have been punished. I am a miserable man. But you are still my wife; be a mother to this my child."

And she is.

A grave and solemn man is now John Cartwright, living alone with his family in the woods; and never has his wife spoken again of the past, for she has seen his much and long suffering, and her memory has not forgotten the dead.

Beneath the towering cupola ye lay
 His clay-cold corse, the banners waving o'er:
 Snow-white the marble shines as gleams of day;
 Far fitter here the purple stain of gore.
 And whilst the organ's deep-toned chords resound,
 And thousands kneel within the lofty fane,
 Shall not your angry spirits hover round,
 Ye, who at his command were basely slain?

D'Enghien, and Palm, and thou, brave Tyrolese,
 Hofer, the frank, the free,
 Shall ye not join in these loud obsequies,
 This nation's symphony?

Who should the death-chant of the Tyrant sing?
 The fatherless, the victims of his pride!
 Could all assemble, loudly would it ring
 From Russia's wastes beyond the ocean wide.
 All who, to slake his thirst for pomp and power,
 Sank in life's spring to their untimely graves,
 All these around his mouldering corse should cower,
 And join the chorus of the winds and waves.

All, all uniting o'er his tomb should cry,
 "Monarch, thy reign is past!
 We hail thee now: 'twas ours, 'twas thine to die,
 And here we meet at last."

Frenchmen, ye cannot gild a starless night;
 The annals of his crimes ye cannot blot:
 Bury your dead in temples fair and bright!
 His shame, his triumphs, shall not be forgot.
 Bury your dead with all the pomp of earth,
 Yet still the voice of truth on high shall soar:
 Curs'd be the hour that gave a tyrant birth,
 And, thank'd be God, he breathes earth's air no more!"

THE WIFE'S SECRET.

The return of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean to the English stage has given a decided impetus to the fortunes of the theatre. Indeed, we are not so affluent of talent in the highest range of the dramatic art as to be able to spare any portion of its illustrators. Scattered as are the leading members amongst the various metropolitan houses, it is matter of wonderment that a play possessing poetical beauties, and containing the elements of tragical passions, should find fitting embodiment. Our poetical drama, unlike that of other nations, requires a mixed *troupe*, the mere tragedian will not serve its purpose; for, like the paths of many coloured life, which it is its purpose to reflect, it requires as many actors as there are various humours in mankind. A very confined company will serve for the due interpretation of the French, Italian, and German classic drama, but the plays of Shakspeare, his contemporaries and followers, contain food for the loftiest strains of passion, study for the philosopher and metaphysician, epigram for the wit, and puns for the lovers of verbal affinities. The pall of Tragedy and the mask of Comedy, the shudder and the tear, the laugh and the smile, are poured forth from the same urn. Every walk of the stage, from the emperor to the cobbler, requires fitting illustrators. Even the lyric art and choral numbers are frequently necessary for its completion; hence the recurring difficulty and the enormous outlay necessary to support what has been styled the legitimate drama. To carry out its purpose, therefore, with due effect, three distinct companies are absolutely necessary. And even when this has been accomplished, the large theatres have failed, save when some comet has appeared in the theatrical horizon, to astound and perplex the world of playgoers. The united phalanx of the Kemble family was not sufficiently strong to keep their own temple from ruin. John Kemble, Charles Kemble, Macready, Young, Warde, and Mrs. Siddons, were forced to call in the aid of Madame Sachi, a rope-dancer, to swell the treasury, and *Timour the Tartar* and his horses were put into harness literally to draw people to the theatre. The mere play, even with first-rate actors, was found in these so-called palmy days insufficient to attract. The house was failing when Miss O'Neill made her advent, and then the crowds collected, and the fortunes of the theatre swelled up to the brim. Even thus was it with Drury Lane, in spite of its committee composed of the magnates of the land, and its literary celebrities. All was gloom; the clouds hovered above, and gaunt bankruptcy had clutched it, when Edmund Kean arose, and his originality and his genius restored the theatre to solvency. In both instances it was the individual, and not the drama.

No management, however astute, or however wealthy, can support the fluctuating tastes of the public; no managerial power can evoke the actor that will attract, or the drama that shall be successful. Chance and the hour runs through the longest day. Writers may write until their pens be blunt, and the ink runs dry—talkers may talk until their breath fails, and their tongues become swollen—poets may rave, and political economists calculate, but we shall never attain to a real national drama of the highest class unless assisted by a grant for its creation and support by the people through their representatives. Individual speculation must ever degrade it to a mere monetary consideration; and thus it will linger in its throes and its struggles till it be only remembered amongst the things that were. If the ardent desire to establish the drama in its best aspect would suffice to attain the end proposed, Mr. Webster would have succeeded, for he has integrity of purpose, theatrical experience, stage knowledge, and the ambition so important to the fulfilment of the desired end. We here speak by the card; for more new plays have been produced during his direction than during any former period. New authors have been engaged to write, and liberally rewarded. There is no name of literary eminence but has been tempted, from Bulwer and Talfourd to Bourcicault and Morton. Every actor of note has been engaged, and therefore are we not right when we assert that no individual enterprise is sufficient to place our stage literature upon a firm and lasting basis? The Haymarket Theatre, though filled to the roof on each night of the season, would not, from its limited area, suffice for the current outlay of the object to which we advert; yet what could be done has been done—and been well done; for the engagement of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean incontestably proves the effort to be in the right direction, for with the novelty of their reappearance, and the production of a new play, the theatre, which for some time past has been in a waning state, has suddenly assumed an air of prosperity which we trust will be abiding.

The Wife's Secret is by Mr. Lovell, the author of several pieces; and, indeed, its

construction bears intrinsic evidence of the skill and experience of the architect. It is of the mixed class, and may take rank with the romantic dramas of George Colman. The syncretics will, doubtless, shrug their shoulders, and talk contemptuously of its objectiveness, and smile at the bad taste of the public, and seek to prove that the plan is wrong, and that it could not, should not, would not succeed; yet, in spite of these canons of criticism, the play has gone off, not only well, but attained an instant success, and will, we are confident, rejoice in a lasting popularity. Its very transparency is an element in its favour—the self-evident nature of the plot—the singleness of purpose of its characters—the domestic interest of the story—the palpableness of the motives and the self-pride of the audience at their own clearness of perception in discovering the mystery of what is, in fact, no mystery whatsoever, all combine to render it attractive as a drama. That the same event, or, at any rate, events remarkably similar in their bearings, had been previously exhibited is rather than from the purpose; and this is fully established by the result. An eloquent writer has said, that in commenting on the various failures which have too frequently occurred in the theatrical world, he has had to expatiate on the necessity for telling a story well to amuse an audience; that no amount of wit or of poetry, of profundity or of passion, will compensate for a deficiency in this requisite; but, on the other hand, let the tale be well conducted, and it is surprising how moderate an audience will be in exacting other means of gratification; that in this circumstance lay the ground of schism between the envious literati connected with the stage. The men who can write for the theatre are despised by those who cannot write, but have a vague notion as to the purpose to which a drama might be applied. To the latter class, that a play succeeds just because it keeps up the attention for a given time, and affords opportunities for a favourite actor or two to make a display is detestable; and yet this fact obstinately refuses to be talked down. *The Lady of Lyons*, with its doubtful moral, without any writing at all, but with four acts capably managed, sticks to the bills with grim reality, and, however hackneyed, draws good audiences at all sorts of places, and defies the utterances of the most exalted theorists. To people who will look at the affair from a common-sense point of view this state of things is perfectly intelligible. Of the vast class of people who devour morals, the majority demand to be satisfied by the story—deep reflection and delineation of character, however they may contribute to the immorality of a writer, and however they may cause a man's works to be referred to when contemporary productions are forgotten, still only affect a minority of the readers of his own day, when he is read for amusement, and not because he has an established name.

This is clear as noon-day, and proves the necessity of first securing the interest of an audience by a material ground-work before the poetical elaboration be superadded; and this we take to be the secret of the success of Mr. Lovell's play. The plot is exceedingly simple, and can boast of little invention in the ruling incidents; but infinite knowledge is apparent in the distinct articulation of the characters—the constructive means in the building up the materials—the continuous action of the drama—the evolving of the passions—and the perfect completion of the story. Sir Walter Amyott, a zealous partisan of the Parliamentary forces, is married to Lady Eveline, the sister of Lord Arden, an ardent adherent of the Royal cause. In this consists the antagonism of the drama. During the absence of Sir Walter there had been an unsuccessful rising of the Cavaliers, headed by Lord Arden, who had been fain to seek for security in France, but who has been tempted to return to England to head the attempt. The Cavaliers are routed, and Lord Arden, pursued by his enemies, seeks shelter at the abode of his sister. The Lady Eveline receives him, and prays him to become friends with her husband; but all amnesty is spurned by the Cavalier, who binds her by an oath to keep his situation secret from Sir Walter Amyott. The lady takes the oath. At this juncture the husband returns, and every effort is used to keep him in ignorance of the presence of Lord Arden. An old steward (Jabez Sneed) has been detected in divers peculations by the Lady Eveline, and fearing his master's indignation and instant dismissal from his situation, seeks the means of instilling doubts into his master's mind of the virtue of his wife. The accounts, which have been closely examined by Eveline, are kept in an escritoire in the Bower-chamber, in a closet of which lies *perdue* the Cavalier. Fearing that in continuing the use of this chamber Sir Walter Amyott may discover the secret, Eveline determines to abandon it until Lord Arden finds means to escape. This excites the suspicion of Jabez Sneed, who sets to work to penetrate the mystery, and succeeds by scaling the casement to discover the existence of a stranger; but the back being turned he fails in recognising the features. He hastens to Sir Walter Amyott, and apprises him of the circumstance, and urges him to demand the key, which is in the possession of his wife. The train is laid, but not fired—the key is refused, and the pangs of jealousy

rage in the heart of Sir Walter Amyott. Watches are set, and through the window of the Bower-chamber are seen the forms of Lady Eveline and Lord Arden in tender collision. There is no longer doubt—his wife is guilty, and the heart-riven husband falls senseless to the earth. He accuses his wife of infamy, and is about to drive her from her home, when Lord Arden, who has succeeded in procuring a passage for France, is shot at while making his escape. He is brought to the house, and the mystery is unfolded, the clouds are dispersed, and all is sunshine and happiness.

The above is the mere chart of the play; it is filled up with situations of startling incidents, ingenious involvements, and poetical passages of pathos and passion. The honest confidence of the husband in the purity of his wife—the slow doubts which are vainly combatted—the fell fury which follows the certainty of her infidelity—the lingering tenderness, and the final joy are skilfully portrayed in the character of Sir Walter Amyott; while the holy spirit of endurance under unmerited suspicion—the matronly dignity, the wild pathos, and the passionate tearfulness are exquisitely embodied in the Lady Eveline. Jabez Sneed is a graphic sketch; and Maud, a confidential attendant, is drawn with a clever pencil. The two principal characters are admirably adapted to the powers of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean. There is fervid passion for the former, and ample verge and scope for the intense tenderness of the latter; and never have we witnessed a more perfect embodiment, or one more free of the common stage conventionalities. There are scenes which keep the audience spell-bound, and not the slightest phase but is reflected with truthful effect. *The Wife's Secret* is a great triumph for all concerned.

DRAMATIC AND MUSICAL MIRROR.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

No official programme has yet appeared; all that is left for us is to combine the various rumours which have been floating about, and endeavour to put them into shape and consistency. That there is a *prestige* of royalty and fashion connected with Her Majesty's Theatre none will deny—that the present direction has redeemed the property from the slough of despond into which for so long a period it had been cast is incontestible. When the secession of the old *troupe* had left the theatre as void as was the island of Robinson Crusoe—when doubt and dismay reigned around, even then the magic wand of wealth conjured up a strong *troupe*, and the good fairy Jenny Lind dispersed the clouds, and all became sunshine. We have a strong and abiding faith in the management, and we entertain no one doubt that the coming season will be brilliant and prosperous. We hear that the Lind is to be here early in March, and that she will appear in new characters, and act in operas such as the *Lucia*, *Otello*, and others. *The Zauberflote*, and several classical works, will, no doubt, be got up. The celebrated Erminia Tadolini, the great songstress and tragedian, is engaged. Her success in Germany was immense, and she is without a rival throughout Italy. A new prima donna, who made a great success at La Fenice, Signora Crevelli, is spoken of in terms of high laudation. Our old favourite, Moltini, is secured; this engagement will, we are sure, be gratifying to the subscribers and to the general public. Then another prima donna is said to be coming, Louisa Albadia, who has been a favourite at all the great theatres of Italy, and whom, it is said, has eminent talent as a tragic actress. A wonderful contralto, Mdle Schwartz, from Austria, is expected to excite a profound sensation. Gardoni and two other tenors have been engaged, Signor Cugzani and Labocetto from Berlin, and the king of tenors, Rubini, it is whispered, is positively coming. The giant Lablache, and the Doge Coletti, with Bouché, and F. Lablache, are the bassi; and a new bary-tone, Signor Beletti, is added to the *troupe*. The ballet will, it is said, be in strong force, a new one having been written by no less a person than the eminent Scribe. Rosati, and Marie Taglioni, who has been enacting wonders in Germany, will appear. Carlotta Grisi brings with her a new ballet, or one as good as new. Of course there will be M. and Madame St. Leon, and new choregraphic works by Perrot and Paul Taglioni. No doubt strenuous efforts have been made to strengthen and complete the orchestra, and the other departments. The above are mere *mems.*, but we shall have opportunity for elaboration and dilated comment when the official document is given to the world.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

The official programme has appeared; and strong as was the lyrical *troupe* and the orchestral and choral forces brought together last season, the direction seem determined to heap Alp on Alp. New instrumental recruits have been enlisted, additional choristers are to increase the volume of harmonic sounds, new *prima donne* are to illustrate new *repertoires*, and new tenors are to sigh forth their amorous arias to tickle the "auricular nerves" of the musical public. The ballet is reinforced, and names new and strange to English ears stand forth in strong array. How such a combination can be remunerative remains to be proven; and yet, during a lengthened experience, we have found that an affluence of resources is the best security for managerial profit. Grisi, Persiani, Castellani, Viardot Garcia, and Alboni!—five *prima donnas*, each of whom one might suppose to be a tower of strength sufficient to support a theatre upon her own distinctive merit—five suns in one heaven—blindness induced by excess of light—and all moving in one orbit—such a planetary system was never dreamed of in the wildest dream of the wildest lyrical astronomer. And then we are to have the voluptuous warblings of Mario, the strains of Salvi, and the rich notes of Roger—of Roger, who has succeeded to the throne left vacant by the abdication of Duprez. Here are means sufficient to the illustration of every opera, from Paer to Auber—musical appreciation for Mozart—passionate declamation for Glück—melodious splendour for Rossini and his followers. The mere thought of the tremendous cost of such a variety is overpowering; to which if are added the thousand-and-one contingencies of expenditure, the speculation appears rather a mythe, than a commercial undertaking, a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. The spirit which dominates over the theatre would seem to possess the fabled purse of Fortunatus, or at least to have the fee simple of the mines of Potosi. Be this as it may, the public will be the gainers, the art will be benefited, and music will be enwreathed with a splendour unimagined by those who existed

"When music, heavenly maid, was young."

The orchestra of the Royal Italian Opera has been supreme—no Continental orchestra can be put into comparison with it for power and completeness. The stringed instruments have a strength and crispness far surpassing those boasted of by the Paris Conservatoire; the wood and brass are, however, unequal, and this has somewhat damaged the perfect balance of sound—but with the new aids promised, this, no doubt, will be improved. The great classical works are, we hear, to be performed. The *Iphigenia*, with such an *ensemble* as the names we have mentioned, ought to attract every musical amateur in the kingdom. *La Vestale* of Spontini, and the works of Cherubini and Meyerbeer, are to be mounted—Mozart will be in the van, and Rossini will shed his lustre amidst the stellar luminaries of the classic temple. New operas are also spoken of, and Verdi's opera of *Macbeth*, with Grisi as the stern lady of the Thane, will send us back to the golden days of Siddons. *Robert le Diable* is to be conducted by Meyerbeer in person, under whose *surveillance* will also be produced *The Camp of Silesia*; while Auber's last opera, *Le Secret*, will be interpreted by Roger, for whom the principal character was written. If but half be performed that is promised, the season will become an epoch in the musical history of the country. Various alterations and improvements in the audience part of the theatre have been made, amongst which are mentioned the ventilation of the amphitheatre, and the enlargement of the gallery. We would suggest the widening of the passages of the stalls, as during the last season the inconvenience was greatly complained of. Report speaks largely of the immense improvement of Viardot Garcia since her appearance in London. In Russia, she excited a profound sensation, and in Germany so great were her triumphs, that the spirit of partisanship amongst the Viardoisists and Lindists almost amounted, in intensity, to the Parisian war of the Glückists and Piccinists. The success of Alboni at the *Italiens* is also a *point d'appui* for the management.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

The effort made by M. Jullien to establish a national lyric establishment is worthy all praise, and if fully developed there is not a shadow of doubt that a sufficing patronage will ultimately repay the enormous outlay necessary to secure its continuance. The prospects, in despite of many countervailing circumstances, growing out of want of experience and want of method, look cheerfully. The mistakes of a first short season will be corrected by time; and the direction will, we feel assured, be rewarded for the excellence of the object, and the liberal expenditure that has been devoted to present opera with a completeness hitherto unparalleled in an English theatre. During the vacation there will be opportunity for maturing the designs for the next season; errors will be corrected,

a succession of new works will be got in readiness, plans will be conceived and carried out, which will ensure success. The only novelty which has been produced since our last has been the *Linda di Chamouni*, in which four new appearances essayed their vocal qualification for public approbation. Mrs. Lea, formerly Miss Susan Hobbs, was the *prima donna*, and her means, though too *petite* for so large a space, would be efficient in a smaller arena. She has a high soprano voice, thin in quality, though of extensive register, and vocalises with facility and with correct intonation. Mr. Lea, the *marito*, is a small barytone of little merit, without a particle of dramatic passion; and Mr. Gregg is a *basso profondo* who out Staudigl's Staudigl. Mr. Santiago is a pocket tenor, also without dramatic means. It was impolitic to produce this batch of *débütants* in the same opera; but, apart from this, M. Jullien deserves praise for seeking to bring forward new candidates for public approval. The same system is pursued in Italy and Paris; and, though some failures must necessarily occur, has been found to work well. The houses have been uniformly excellent.

OLYMPIC THEATRE.

A more than usual excitement has prevailed in theatrical circles, induced by the first appearance of Mr. Gustavus V. Brooke on the London stage. This gentleman, many years past, appeared at various minor metropolitan theatres, as a sort of histrionic phenomenon—a precocious Roscius. Time, as usual, destroyed the attraction of the boy-tragedian, and he for many years studied the knowledge and practice of his art in the provinces. In various theatres he was the ruling star. At Sheffield, York, Leeds, and Liverpool the star increased in refulgence, till it became a comet. Various offers had been made to tempt him to risk the ordeal of the great Babylon; but though engagements were entered into, papers signed, and name in the bills, the ratification remained still to be effected. Disagreements and disappointments, resulting from choice of time and opening parts, continued. Mr. Macready supposed he had secured him for Drury Lane, when lo! the untied tragedian was *non est inventus*. Years rolled on, and still Mr. Gustavus V. Brooke was satisfied with provincial praise and provincial plaudits, until the present direction of the Olympic Theatre managed to lime the "errant bird." A more fortunate hit could not have been made, for that curiosity which had been for so lengthened a period thirsting for the sight was at length to be indulged, and (we may add) not disappointed. Mr. Brooke appeared in *Othello*, and like Byron upon the morning subsequent to the publication of the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," found himself famous. Mr. Brooke is rather above the middle height, and well formed; his head is well set on his shoulders, his features expressive, and his action unconstrained and graceful. His voice is potent, but well modulated, and capable of rendering passages of pathos as well as of power. There is an absence of imitation; neither the beauties nor the defects of any celebrated tragedian, past or present, are aped. He evidently depends on his own mental resources, and does not avail himself of preconceived conceptions. He has studied the play as well as the chief character, and hence his portraiture of the noble Moor, if not characterised by many brilliant coruscations of genius, is not degraded by stereotyped conventionalities. Perhaps at moments there is a lack of finish, though we are inclined to think that this may result from the confined dimensions of the stage on which he now exhibits. Upon a more fitting and more extended arena, this might not be so apparent. Mr. Brooke seldom exaggerates—never tears the passion to rags—to delight the ears of the groundlings. Indeed, at moments a greater degree of energy would be beneficial; but this, if we want, is assuredly on the right side. The celebrated address to the senate, though tending more to the rhetorical than to the narrative, was earnestly and sensibly declaimed; and the various points in the glorious third act—that masterpiece of dramatic genius, which casts into the shade all that the boasted Greek poets ever dreamed or wrote—lost nothing of its sublime wonders in the rendering. The growing jealousy, and the mental agony, and the heart-quake, and the final determination to avenge his ruin, were all admirably delineated. The applause was enthusiastic and continuous. The fifth act we esteem to be his greatest achievement, for in this the dramatic abstraction is more intense, and the actor more self-dependent. We refrain from citing especial passages for comment, as these have been dilated upon again and again by our journal contemporaries. Before, however, returning a final verdict upon Mr. Brooke, we must see him in another character. We have been so often deceived with "single-speech Hamiltons."

SURREY THEATRE.

Music is a universal language: from Indus to the Pole—from the satined *salons* of Paris to the log-built huts in the back woods of America, its tones reach with instant sympathy to the human breast. The universe is full of music; but, like the music of Plato's spheres, it passes unheeded amidst the busy turmoil of mortals. The denizens of Belgravia may feast upon the foreign warblings of Her Majesty's Theatre, yet we are inclined to doubt whether they enjoy with equal zest and similar appetite the lyrical art, as do the visitors of the Surrey. Mr. Bunn may be considered as the true lyrical Columbus of the transpantine world; for though portions of the land were before discovered, yet to Mr. Bunn is due the honour of the final possession. The appearances of an operatic *troupe* previous to his management were, "like angels' visits, few and far between." He has now established opera as the principal attraction of the theatre; he has organised an orchestra both full and efficient; and has secured the co-operation of many of the leading English vocalists—Miss Romer, Mr. Harrison, Mr. and Mrs. King, Mr. H. Phillips, &c. The Surrey is thoroughly an English Opera House. The works of Balfe, Wallace, and other popular native composers, have here received an increased popularity; and the various melodies which had attained an exclusive home at the west, have now become familiar as household words to even the jacketless visitor of the sixpenny gallery. Shall we deny the humanising influences to be derived from the change of morbid dramas, assisted by broad-sword combats, seasoned with blue and red fires? There can, we apprehend, be no question of the moral benefit of the exchange. *The Bohemian Girl* has, with her change of place, fascinated myriads of new admirers; and the "Marble Halls" are welcomed with a delight infinitely beyond what was wont to greet the scenic splendours of the old spectacles. *Martina* is the pet of the *habitués*; and now *The Daughter of the Regiment* has driven former loves into comparative forgetfulness; but the public is proverbially fickle, and too often reverses the old Scotch aphorism—"Tis well be off with the old love before you are on with the new." Miss Poole, though not an absolute Swedish nightingale, warbles as sweetly as any singing bird in the entire range of ornithology; and we must bear in mind that the songstress is an English singing bird—and very proud are we of her fresh young voice, and distinct enunciation, and modest manner, and pure style; and then she beats the drum with a grace and distinctness of roll sufficient even to awaken the military ardour of a member of the Lumber Troop! Very piquant, also, is her costume—with the close-fitting vest and coquettish petticoat. Altogether, her cheerful chirruping and rich roulades form a very appetising combination. The choruses are capably executed; and the scenery, dresses, and appointments testify to the exceeding liberality of Mr. Bunn's management.

MARYLEBONE THEATRE.

One of the surest tests of a theatre's success is its adherence to the same style of performance. It proves that the tastes of the patrons are judiciously studied, and that the current attractions suffice to draw audiences. Mrs. Warner, by the introduction of a better order of drama, by the engagement of an efficient company, and by the liberality and taste exemplified in the production of pieces, has done very much to elevate the dramatic *status* of the theatre. The selection and restoration of many of the works of the most celebrated English writers, and the admirable manner with which they have been represented, we have reason to believe has not alone filled the treasury, but has, at the same time, created a positive appetite for that better fare to which the visitors have now become accustomed. We have strenuously advocated the necessity of cultivating the public taste, for never did any management find its account in ministering to the grosser appetites of an audience. Duty and profit may be united, while amusement and instruction walk hand-in-hand. Mrs. Warner's educated taste, mental refinement, and artistic knowledge must secure for her praiseworthy efforts in so good a cause, the gratitude of every well-wisher of the stage, and of popular improvement.

LITERARY MIRROR.

THE LITTLE BALL O' FIRE; OR, THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF JOHN MARSTON HALL. By G. P. R. James, Esq. London: Parry and Co., 1848.

We have so frequently noticed the novels of Mr. James, that our readers must, by this time, be aware in what estimation we hold them. Without possessing that vigour of intellect which is requisite to carry a man's name down to posterity, our author may be regarded in a very favourable point of view. Having powers far superior to the general run of novel writers, and a disposition to represent life as it is, regarding society with attention, he readily perceives the person who may be suitable for his subject; but he does not possess the power of sketching a character in a sentence. His great fault is diffuseness; he dwells at too great a length on points that deserve only a passing remark, and often wearies the attention by lengthy descriptions.

Macaulay very justly remarks that Byron could describe but two good characters with great success, and although he occasionally, by a happy effort, hits upon something new, still his hero and heroine have the same characteristics in all his principal poems. The same thing may almost be said of James. There is not sufficient variety in his *dramatis personæ*; he has favourites whom he sketches with remarkable skill, but he dwells too much on their images, and falls into the error of introducing them again and again. They may appear under different names, another country may claim their allegiance, they may move in a different station, but we can recognise them; the same spirit animates them, whatever their position. This is a great objection to a novelist; he should recollect how great a charm there is in variety.

We would not, however, have our readers imagine that this is always the case. James often appears under a new garb, throws aside his old associations, and plunges into a new career. He then carries the reader with him, and delights him equally with his freshness of plot and detail, and the gentlemanly tone of his writing. Without possessing the genius of Scott, or the happy power of Dickens to sketch in an epigrammatic manner the characteristics of society, James may claim for himself a high standing in the literary world. His style is vigorous and easy, and shows considerable knowledge of the resources of the English language.

"The Little Ball o' Fire" possesses some very peculiar characteristics; it is, in fact, one of the most interesting novels that James has written. The Ball o' Fire is the name given to a youth who serves as page in various families, and, by gaining the confidence of his masters, acquires an intimate knowledge of their proceedings. He is a boy who, being early led into the wars by his father, is thrown, by his parent's death, on his own resources, and thus acquires a shrewdness beyond his years; the knowledge of human nature which the boy instinctively imbibes may be overdrawn, but it is almost impossible to exaggerate the effects of action and the habit of self-reliance on a naturally precocious disposition. Mr. James has skilfully worked up this character; our interest in Master Hall increases every chapter, until we lose the idea of fiction, and imagine we are reading the journal of a lad who made notes of the events that passed around him. The whole story is replete with rapid sketches, stirring adventure, and pretty descriptions; our author preserves his customary diffuseness, and, by rendering his story more concise, adds a double value.

The public have assigned Mr. James a very good position—this it is impossible to deny; but we may yet venture to remark that he writes too rapidly. He possesses a great mastery over the English language, and is thus tempted to abuse his power. A little more attention would raise Mr. James many steps up the ladder. The present volume constitutes one of the reprints published by Messrs. Parry and Company, and is very neatly got up, and would form a cheap and valuable addition to any library.

PARLOUR LIBRARY. THE EMIGRANTS OF AHADARA. Belfast: Sims and M'Intyre.

It is some time since we have noticed the progress of this series. At the outset we resolved to notice only the English novels, and to abstain from speaking altogether of the French translations. To this determination we have rigidly adhered, convinced that too resolute an opposition cannot be sustained against the influx into our homes of these poisonous productions. Our regret has been that "The Parlour Library" did not refuse to

sanction the novels of Dumas, George Sand, and Eugene Sue; but the excuse that may be urged in defence is a comprehensible one—viz., that there is a leaning in human nature towards what is forbidden. A rage is speedily excited after anything mysterious. The influence of French novels is secret and unseen. At first the youthful reader is contented to admire the rich flow of style; but by-and-by he will find himself ingeniously converting into instruments of self-defence some of those artful sophisms which the French novelist knows so well how to introduce under the merit of virtue. A new and less rigid code of morals is soon infused into the mind. No startling crimes are committed; but sins which before were startling, both in the commission and the consequence, come to be regarded as very venial offences. There is an excuse for everything, a cloud of sentimentality obscures the heights of virtue, and rules and precepts are lost sight of in the dim light of willing self-delusion. Much, therefore, as we desire the success and continued popularity of "The Parlour Library" we shall earnestly continue to deprecate the practice of introducing French novels at all into this admirable series, which might be the instrument of lightening many an hour and carrying a rich fund of amusement into many a circle, hitherto destitute of such a source of enjoyment. Many of the volumes which have appeared have been highly talented and interesting. Many names of just celebrity have adorned the list of contributors, but among them all there is scarcely a more talented writer than Mr. Carleton. He possesses most of the qualifications requisite to a writer of fiction. His style is in general rapid and animated, his incidents amusing, his characters judiciously conceived and ably executed. "The Black Prophet" displayed all these characteristics; but in "The Emigrants of Ahadara" Mr. Carleton has unquestionably surpassed his former efforts. The story contains both a strong and striking domestic interest. Both currents flow on—the one swift, impetuous, and with energy; the other rolls on deeply, silently, but beautifully. Many characters are introduced, all distinguished admirably one from the other, and sufficiently remarkable in themselves. Kathleen Cavanagh is a beautiful creation. Her noble trust—her love for Bryan—her high unshaken principle—her rigid regard for the principle of honour—her love to her parents,—all are exquisitely portrayed; and then the one falling aside, where she suffers herself to doubt her love, only shows her to be the real woman, without lowering her in our estimation in the least. Hannah, her sister, is a very sweet character, and Dora a very lovable one. Bryan, the hero, is a noble and generous-minded young man; and in Ikey Burke Mr. Carleton has hit off the villain to a T. Our author excels in the delineation of Irish character—he brings out into bold relief their generous feeling, their impulsive manner of acting, and the deep affection they bear towards one another in their families. Doubtless there are bad people among the Irish, but taken as a nation they are full of the elements of good. Those who regard them with a prejudiced eye deny in them the existence of moral excellence; but with them no honest men will side. In "The Emigrants of Ahadara" we have them brought before us in all grades—the good and the bad act their due parts, and are rewarded in them, and with strict poetical justice. This is the first original novel written expressly for the series which has appeared; and if it meets with the success it so pre-eminently deserves, it will become even more popular than any of those which have already been before the public.

THE BRITISH POETS OF THE PRESENT CENTURY. Kent and Richards, Paternoster-row.

A book under this title, by Mr. Alfred Dixon Toovey, Author of "Modern Life," &c., has been presented to our notice. It is a most interesting publication, containing recollections of some of the most eminent poets of the present century. To each poem is annexed an agreeable and useful epitome of the author's artistic career; with the chronological period of his life and death. The selections embrace the works of many poets living at the present time, among whom we observe, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, Thomas Babington Macaulay, &c.; likewise Byron, Sir W. Scott, Wordsworth; and others, whose works we feel need no further criticism than that already bestowed upon them. Mr. Toovey, in his ably-written preface, says—"It will be readily conceded by all that no age was ever more prolific in the production of what bears the form of poetry than the present. Verses come teeming from the press, though they subsequently moulder on the shelf—from epics to ballads, from tragedies to farces, we have no complaint of the dearth of rhymes." The volume we can faithfully recommend to all lovers of poetry, and those anxious to become acquainted with the beauties of the poets of this century.